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WITH ALL ITS THORNS.

BY PHILIP BOURKE MARSTON.

Love has turned his face away:
Weep, sad eyes!
Love is now of yesterday.
Time that flies,
Bringing glad and grievous things,
Bears no more Love's shining wings.

Love was not all glad, you say;
Tears and sighs
In the midst of kisses lay.
Were it wise,
If we could, to bid him come,
Making with us one more home?

Little doubts that sting and prey,
Hurt replies,
Words for which a life should pay—
None denies
These of Love were very part,
Thorns that hurt the rose's heart.

Yet should we beseech Love stay,
Sorrow dies,
And if Love will but delay
Joy may rise,
Since, with all its thorns, the rose
Is more than any flower that blows.

Two Wedding Rings.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A BLACK VEIL," "HER MOTHER'S CRIME," "A BROKEN WEDDING-RING," "MABEL MAY," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER III.

FROM that day I saw Mrs. Hardross more frequently.

She seemed to have overcome some, at least, of her fears; she no longer turned deadly pale at the wash of the waves or the lurches of the vessel.

Yet she did not seem to care much about seeing the other passengers, or being with them.

She preferred the early morning hours on deck, and more than once I found her there waiting to see the sun rise.

She liked the nights when the moon shone and the light of the stars glinted over the sea.

Mrs. Vann confided in me that she fancied Mrs. Hardross shrank from them because she found them all her superiors.

I may mention *en passant* that Mrs. Vann had the greatest admiration for my title.

She would have served a duchess on her knees.

She believed in nothing so implicitly as the divine right of the aristocracy. A title dazzled her.

Virtue, genius, all were as nothing compared to the 'empty prefix' which announced a lord.

She affected to be on very intimate terms with leaders of society; and she put the climax to her absurdity by looking down from a lofty summit of imagined superiority on the captain's wife—sweet Laurie Stuart, who had no title, but who was innately a lady if ever one lived.

"I try to be very kind to her, Sir Gordon," said the obtuse lady.

"I see that you are sorry for her. But she is never at home with me. My father, who held, as I have told you, a position under Government, always said that people of different grades were never really at ease together."

The fact was that some of the ladies were jealous of the captain's wife.

Not Mrs. Chaplin; her noble face never looked so kind or so gentle as when she was near Laurie Stuart.

Mrs. Stanton, the major's wife, loved her; and Mrs. Leslie, when she could spare a moment from her husband, invariably gave it to the captain's wife.

But some of the others were jealous of her fair delicate loveliness.

They called her terror of the sea affectation.

They said she only affected fear to engage the attention of gentlemen.

By the crew and those who were not jealous of her beauty she was most dearly loved.

She was certainly like a gleam of sunshine on those days when, the sea being calm, the weather fine, and the sun bright, she came on deck.

She seemed to bring a new atmosphere with her.

Her beautiful face had the dainty color of a wild rose.

Her dark eyes were clear and luminous, the sheen of her golden hair dazzled one.

She was plainly dressed, but no queen in her royal robes could have looked more lovely than this tall, slender, graceful girl in her simple attire.

"The captain ought to love her," one rough sailor would say to another; "she is fair as an angel."

The crew had a kind of a worship for her—and I did not wonder at it when I watched her.

There was a gentle dignified kindness about her that was irresistible.

When she spoke to any one of them, her voice was like sweetest music, her smile like a gleam of sunlight.

No rough word was heard when the captain's wife was near.

One of the sailor boys fell sick, and while fine ladies whispered together about their fear of infection, sweet Laurie Stuart went to see him, knelt by his side, talked to him of his mother and of heaven, all unconscious that the men around her listened with tears in their eyes, and would have laid down their lives for her sake, so great was their reverence for her.

"It is a pity she ever came to sea," one would say to another; "she is not fit for this rough life."

The days passed on, and to me it was wonderful to observe how all our passengers became one family as it were.

One of the prettiest sights on board was to see the young wife, Helen Leslie, take one of Mrs. Stanton's children in her arms, slyly steal away with it to some remote corner of the vessel, and lavish all the love of her heart in kisses on the little face—wondering, innocent kisses—kisses that were almost a passionate prayer that Heaven might one day send her such a treasure of her own.

It was pretty and amusing too to see how quickly the child was put down when her husband came in sight.

We had all learned during these days to feel the greatest affection and esteem for Mrs. Chaplin.

She had such a passionate love for the children she had left behind in England; when the sun was setting, or the sweet solemn twilight reigned, she would sit watching the skies, and weaving dreams of a future with those dear children which was never to be.

She would describe them to us—tell us the color of their eyes and hair—how they had kissed her when she bade them farewell.

How many hopes and dreams lived on board with us!

Major Stanton and his wife were great favorites; their little children were plaything for all on board.

Mr. and Mrs. Vann were essentially our comic couple—and we certainly enjoyed their peculiarities very much.

"My dear," the stout little gentleman would say, with a frantic attempt at being quite at his ease, "it is so very warm, I should like a lice drink; I—I beg pardon—an ice."

His wife's frown should have petrified him, but it did not.

"There is no reason why you should not have an ice drink if you wish for one," she would reply sternly; and then he would be too frightened to mention it again.

Her grandeur, her continual allusions to her father's position, her evident fear lest her husband should in any way commit himself, her desire to impress us all with her aristocratic ideas, were most amusing.

Perhaps her husband's anxiety about his h's and his dread of his wife were more amusing still.

As we got fairly on our way the captain's duties appeared to become more onerous.

It happened one day that in going alone from the cabin to the helm, where her husband stood talking, Mrs. Hardross fell and hurt her wrist.

He was very distressed about it, and when I saw his distress I realized that he loved her dearly, despite his terrible temper.

He came to me that afternoon and began to talk to me.

We walked along the deck to the end of the vessel, and stood watching the broad calm sweep of the waves.

Suddenly he laid his hand on my shoulder.

"Sir Gordon," he said, "I am a cold, hard stern man, but there is one warm love in my heart, one flower in the desert. I love my wife.

"They are very simple and cold words—they do not express one tithe of what I feel—but you will understand them."

I made him some answer; my surprise was almost too great for words.

"At times," he continued, "I am half sorry that I have brought her to sea; yet, if a woman loves her husband, she should love his profession too—should she not, Sir Gordon?"

"You would hardly expect a soldier's wife to love bayonets or guns," I said.

"No, perhaps not; but, if a wife really and truly loves her husband, would she not rather go to sea with him than live on land without him?"

"I do not know—I cannot tell. I have no wife."

He went on, speaking with an air of thoughtful musing, looking the while over the wide expanse of waters.

"She did not want to come with me. She said that she was afraid of the sea. She clung to me with weeping eyes, and begged of me to let her live on land, saying that she would watch and pray for me."

"It would have been better perhaps to have let her," I remarked.

His face grew dark with an angry flush, and his grasp tightened on my arm.

"Do you think so, Sir Gordon? Well, I am of opinion that a woman who loves her husband should wish to be with him. Do you think fear of the sea would have parted Juliet from Romeo?

"Sir Gordon, when with weeping eyes my wife clung to me, and prayed to be left on land, a devil awoke in my heart—a mad passionate, angry devil—one whom I can no more conquer than I can bid the winds and waves to rise and swell—mad, bitter jealousy.

"Why should she wish to live on land while I was at sea?

"I unclasped her arms and pushed back the pleading face.

"'You will go to sea,' I said, 'even if we go to the bottom of the deep blue ocean together!'

"She fell back crying, after the fashion of weak women, ever since. Why, if she loved me, did she not come and say to me—

"'I am afraid of the sea, but because you are going I too must go?'

"Then I should have felt sure she loved me, and I might have left her on land. I believe, Sir Gordon, that I went mad with jealous rage in that hour."

He spoke in a dreamy voice, less to me than to himself.

I could not control my wonder. Why should this stern, reserved man select me as his confidant? Suddenly he recovered himself.

"You will wonder why I am saying all this to you, Sir Gordon.

"When I was a boy, in my father's house there hung a picture called 'The Border Knight.'

"I never knew who the Border Knight was, or what he had done; but he had a dark splendid face, full of power and kindness, of courage and honor.

"I took a fancy to the face; and the moment I saw you, Sir Gordon, I said to myself that you were exactly like my Border Knight."

"I ought to feel flattered," I said but he interrupted me hastily.

"I do not mean that; I have no wish, no desire to flatter.

"It is not that. The Border Knight had a face that man, woman or child could not fail to trust—so have you.

"It is because I can trust you that I speak so frankly to you.

"I want to ask you," he continued, after a few moments' silence, "to take some little care of my wife.

"Laurie likes you; she likes talking to you.

"I never have much time to spend with her.

"Will you give a little time to her, and try to make her lose her foolish fear of the sea?"

He intrusted his wife so implicitly to me. Looking into his stern, rugged face, I felt that I should be no man if ever by the lightest word, the faintest thought, I betrayed that trust—and Heaven knows I never did.

* * * * * *

The heat was intense.

We were steaming through the Indian Ocean.

The golden sun, shining so triumphantly in the blue sky, was literally scorching in its heat; the water was alternately gold and blue.

The beautiful Water-Queen went on her way rejoicing—the captain was prouder than ever of his noble vessel.

There was but little wind, and the long sleepy waves had no freshness in them—they were in all hues in the light of that gorgeous sun; there was no foam, no spray, except that which the steamer made as she cleaved the great pathless waters.

A large awning had been suspended over the deck, and if shelter could be found anywhere, it was beneath it.

I saw Mrs. Chaplin seeking the shade—she smiled at me.

"This is a terrible morning to encounter, Sir Gordon," she said. "We could fly from the mist and the rain—we cannot fly from the sun."

I thought she looked very pale.

"You have not brought a book, Mrs. Chaplin, or I might have read to you."

"It is too warm," she replied. "I have some fancy-work here, but cannot do anything. Look at the golden glow of the water, Sir Gordon, it is almost like a sea of fire!"

I found her a seat under the white awning, and then Mrs. Stanton came, leading her lovely little girl by the hand.

"This is a foretaste of India," she said, laughingly.

"The major has been drinking iced soda-water all the morning. Mrs. Leslie, sit down by me; I can tell you something of Indian life."

"Where is my husband?" asked the happy, loving young wife—at which question there was a general laugh. We were

all on intimate terms with each other, and tossed each other by this time.

"You must try to exist for five minutes without him. He has gone to the captain's room with the chief engineer—I saw them go," said Mrs. Chaplin.

Then, to make the party complete, Mrs. Hardross, looking most delicately lovely, in a loose white morning dress trimmed with blue ribbon, joined us.

The flush deepened a little on her fair face, and a light of welcome shone in her sweet eyes, as I found a seat for her. In my own thoughts I called her by no other name than sweet Laurie Stuart.

A slight breeze sprang up, so slight that it did not freshen the waves, but it was welcome.

A golden haze of heat seemed to lie over the blue waters.

"What a summer day!" sighed Laurie Stuart, as she sank back on to the cushions that I had arranged for her.

"I wonder if we shall go near enough to any of the islands to get a breath of the flowers?"

"No," said Mrs. Chaplin; "you may be sure that the flowers you see will be Indian ones, tall, brilliant, gorgeous in hue, rich in perfume, very different from the simple blossoms at home."

"A summer day," repeated Laurie, thoughtfully. "Oh, to be just one hour on land!"

The dark eyes were dim with unshed tears, the delicate lips so like crimson flowers quivered like the lips of a grieving child.

Mrs. Chaplin looked kindly at her.

"Tell us what the spot you are thinking of is like," she said.

The girl's fair face flushed with rapture.

"How can I," she said. "No poet has ever satisfied me with his description of a summer day.

"I know how the spot looks, how the sunshine falls slanting across the grass, how the crimson poppy shines amongst the corn the wild roses are climbing over the hedges and the clove carnations load the evening air with perfume.

"In the lovely green woods there are nooks filled with soft, dark-green light, where the boughs are tangled overhead, and wild flowers innumerable cover the ground."

"You make my heart long for old England," said Mrs. Chaplin; but Helen Leslie looked up at her with a happy light in her eyes.

"Wherever my husband lives," she said, "will seem to me the fairest land."

"I know one spot," continued Laurie, "which only to think of on this burning Indian Ocean makes me yearn to be at home again."

"Tell me about it," said Mrs. Chaplin.

"It is my father's home—a nook in an old-fashioned garden.

"A tall spreading lime-tree stands in one corner, and round its roots grows soft green grass.

"Close to it is a well—an old-fashioned well with a wooden cover, and velvety moss all around it; the stones are always wet—the moss is wet, the water that comes from the well is cold as ice and as clear as crystal.

"There is a rustic wooden seat underneath the tree, and the pleasant sound of dripping water is always heard.

"I forget that we are on a burning sea, beneath a burning sun, when I think of the old well in the garden."

Mrs. Chaplin was silent.

Mrs. Stanton said:

"You must love what you speak of to describe it so well;" but Helen Leslie, raising her happy eyes, put in:

"All places are alike when we are with those that we love best"—words that came back to my mind some time afterward.

The major sent for his wife some minutes later, and pretty Mrs. Leslie engaged in a game with the little ones.

Mrs. Chaplin, the captain's wife, and myself sat alone.

It was Mrs Hardross who, gazing at the noble face, said:

"You appear very sad in the midst of this glow of sunshine, Mrs. Chaplin."

She looked up with the expression of one startled from sleep.

"I was just thinking of my dream," she replied.

"You must not laugh at me, Sir Gordon, but I have had an unpleasant dream—a dream that has frightened me."

"But," said Laurie, "you surely do not believe in dreams?"

"No, but this one has frightened me. I should be ashamed to say so much to any one else.

"Sir Gordon has been as kind as a younger brother to me; and you, Laurie, are like my eldest child.

"I will tell you what I dreamed. I fancied that the ship and everything in it had vanished.

"I saw no human face, I heard no human voice.

"The sea was calm, quiet, heavy and silent as a sea of lead, and I lay on it with my face raised to the skies, not drowned—nor do I remember that I had any fear of drowning, but, as I looked up at the sky, I saw my children gazing down at me with smiling faces.

"They held a crown in their hands—a crown all shining with jewels; and, though the distance was so great from the sea on which I was lying to the sky where they were waiting for me, I found myself rising slowly from the sea, always lying in the same position, with my face raised to heaven.

"It seemed to me that I ascended through miles and miles of clear air, leaving the leaden seas beneath me; and, as I drew nearer to my children, I heard them so plainly, I raised my arms crying out, 'My darlings—oh, my children!' And then I woke, to hear the rapid rush of the waves, and to remember that I was on board the Water-Queen."

We agreed that it was an extraordinary dream.

"I never shall like the sea," said the captain's wife; "and if ever I reach land, nothing shall induce me to leave it again."

"You forget, my dear, that you must do what your husband wishes," remarked Mrs Chaplin; and I felt a useless, helpless kind of anger that this delicate, beautiful girl must submit to the stern captain's decree.

A day or two after that, as I passed by the captain's cabin, I heard her singing; it pleased yet touched me deeply that the song she sang was "Annie Laurie."

Gradually we became the dearest of friends.

In all the long hours we spent together—in the early dawn of the morning, when the sun rose, in the golden noon, when the sun was in its zenith, in the evening, when it crimsoned the west, in the moonlight that spiritualized everything it fell from my lips or hers, not one look passed between us that would not have borne an angel's scrutiny.

Her husband and intrusted her to me, and his trust was sacred.

I thought her the loveliest, sweetest, and most graceful girl I had ever seen.

My heart warmed to her unbounded pity and compassion.

Every sound of her voice was dear to me; but I should have lost my respect for her had that same dear voice uttered one word that her husband would not have liked.

The little white hand that lay like the white petal of a flower on mine was never touched by me save in the grasp of purest friendship; I know that her innocent thoughts turned to me with a kind of sisterly affection.

Heaven forbid that it should have been otherwise!

One night there came a change in the weather.

The light breeze died away, and a dull leaden calm fell over the waters—a terrible calm, the precursor to a storm.

I spoke to the chief mate, who told me the captain had prepared for a storm.

They did not think it would be a severe one.

They were of frequent occurrence in the Indian Ocean, but they were soon over.

I knew there was not the least cause for apprehension—the Water-Queen had weathered many such storms.

But my heart was heavy for Laurie Stuart.

She was frightened enough when the sky was smiling and the sea calm; what would she do in a storm?

It was for her sake that I prayed Heaven to keep from us the fury of wind and wave.

The sun set in a leaden day.

There was not the faintest breath of air; we were enveloped in an almost intolerable heavy sultry mist.

I knew by the faces of the passengers that they were saying to each other, "We shall have a storm;" and I led Laurie Stuart away from them lest she should overhear their remarks.

"Everyone looks very dull to-night, Sir Gordon," she said. "What is wrong?"

"The heat is so great that people feel exhausted," I replied.

She raised her beautiful face and looked around.

"What a peculiar color everything has! The sky looks as though it was going to fall on us, the sea looks like lead; and, it may be fancy—there seems to be a strange odor in the air. I am frightened."

I looked at her: she was trembling, and her face had grown pale.

"Mrs. Hardross," I said, "you would surely not be alarmed at a little wind and rain, or even a flash of lightning?"

Even as I spoke I heard the far-off rumble of thunder.

I shall never forget how she clung to my arm—how deathly white she grew. Then she said in a low whisper:

"There is going to be a storm, Sir Gordon. Dear Heaven, what shall I do? I shall die of fear."

Even then I did not take the trembling hands into my own. I tried to comfort her, but it was in vain.

"Let me be with you," she cried; "I shall not be so frightened with you."

But I doubted that; and, before the gale broke upon us, I spent my time in trying to make her realize how grand a storm was on the ocean.

All I won from her was the one pitiful cry;

"I am so frightened! Dear Heaven what shall I do?"

CHAPTER IV.

AN hour later everything was ready for the tempest—the ship was prepared for it, the sailors were at their posts. The passengers had been ordered below; the chief officers were all on deck.

"It will not be much, I suppose, captain?" I said, anxious only that his wife should not suffer a prolonged agony of fear. He looked gravely at me.

"It will be like all storms of the kind," he said—"terrible while it lasts, but of short duration."

What would Mrs. Hardross suffer?

Despite the captain's orders, I came on deck, trusting that, in the darkness and confusion, he would not see or recognize me.

I could not see or speak to his wife—she had retired to her cabin; but I felt that I must be somewhere near her.

She had asked to be with me while the storm lasted; that, however, could not be. The tempest burst at last.

The shrill winds came piping over the seas.

The dead leaden calm was broken.

The lowering clouds grew darker; terrible flashes of lightning pierced the skies and lit up the seas.

The leaden waves had broken into angry foam.

They came on with a fearful rush—they leaped and bolted with fury.

The horror was deepened by the roar of the thunder.

I knew how terrified Mrs. Hardross would be.

The Water-Queen began to rock terribly; but there was no danger—the faces of officers and men were kind and brave.

Still I hovered round the cabin where Laurie Stuart lay, knowing that each gust of wind, each creak of the timbers, each roar of the thunder would strike her with deadly terror.

Once, when the wind subsided for a moment, and the dash of the waves was hushed, I heard her moan like one sick with pain.

I clenched my fingers and bit my lips those moans were hard to bear.

Yet what right had I to offer to console her.

Then the storm increased in intensity; the sky grew black as night, the noise of the waves was terrible to hear, the thunder clashes were like the bursting of a hundred cannon, the lightning was incessant, the sea resembled nothing so much as boiling ink—the creaking of the timbers of the good ship added to the horror of the scene.

Strong and fearless as I was, my nerves were almost unstrung.

Just then the door of the captain's cabin opened, and a face I shall never forget looked out at the storm.

It was Laurie's face, whiter than death itself with ghastly fear, her dark eyes distended with dread, her lips quivering, her hands beating the air in the madness of fright.

Above the din of the storm her voice rose in a terrified shriek.

"Eric, Eric, the ship is sinking! Eric, Eric, we are going down!"

I saw and heard, yet I was obliged to stand still.

I did not dare to go to her assistance just yet.

Some one must have gone in search of the captain, for in a few minutes he came down in great haste looking with impatient contempt on his wife's madness of fear.

"What is it? What do you want, Laurie?" he shouted.

She looked up at him—I have never seen such a picture of terror—she clung to him, her hands grasping his arms, his neck. She was mad with fear.

"We are drowning, Eric!" she cried. "Oh, Heavens, I am afraid! The ship is sinking!"

"What nonsense!" he cried, with an impatient oath.

"You are crazy—let me go. Do not be such a coward!"

The lightning played round them, showing the white ghastly face of the wife, and the dark stern features of the husband.

"This is absurd!" he said, trying to shake off her grasp.

"Go and lie down. I will send some of the women to you. Thank Heaven there is not such another senseless creature on board!"

Just then the ship gave a tremendous lurch.

She screamed aloud; she was perfectly mad with fear.

"Let me go!" he cried, in a voice of thunder.

"I am wanted on deck!" She did not even hear him.

"The ship is sinking!" she cried. "It is going down!"

Above the noise of the storm was heard the voice of the chief mate calling for the captain.

"Let me go," he repeated; "take your arms away."

But she clasped them more tightly around him in a paroxysm of fear.

"Let me go!" he again commanded—and the voice made me shudder.

Still more slowly the poor frightened girl held him.

I saw by the lurid light his face flame with wrath.

He raised his hand with a horrible oath, struck her with his clenched fist.

She fell without a cry, her face downward.

"Now you will let go?" he said, in a tone of sullen wrath.

"To be kept here by a sickly woman's fears when my ship is in peril!

"Go to your cabin until I can send some one to you."

He raised her in his arms as though she were a feather, and in his haste almost tossed her on to the couch in the cabin, then rushed out again, locked the door, and put the key into his pocket.

I had been too full of surprise and horror to interfere, but now I rushed forward.

My impulse, I confess was to take him by the throat and fling him into the sea.

I rushed up after him, vowing to myself that he should pay for that cowardly blow with his life, mad with wrath and pity; but, when I had reached the topmost step, the vessel gave a sudden lurch, and I fell head first down again, striking my forehead with such force against the lowest step that I lost all consciousness, and remained there until with the early dawn some of the sailors found me and carried me to my cabin.

It was broad daylight when I woke—woke to the remembrance of the terrified face, the clinging arms, and the cruel blow—woke, to find the sun shining brightly, the sea growing calm in a golden light, the swell of the waves subsiding, all trace of the storm gone by.

The only thing left was a memory that made me shudder.

He had struck her, the coward—beaten down with a fierce blow her who had clung to him—tossed her aside in the hour of deadly fear; and I had been unable to interfere.

I thought of many things. Should I go to him, and calling him a coward, punish him?

Should I tell him with fiery contempt, that I knew how he ill-treated his wife, and that if he did so again I would slay him?

I thought long and anxiously; but it was all in vain.

I could do nothing.

I could not interfere.

She was his wife—no man can interfere between husband and wife.

If I said one word to him, I was quite sure that he would never allow her to speak to me again; and then the little comfort that I could give her must cease.

Yet it seemed to me cowardice as great as his, if I stood by without befriending her.

The morning was brilliant when I went on deck.

Most of the passengers were there.

The heat of the sun had dried the decks, and the storm had left no trace beyond the slight freshness of the breeze and the swell of the waves.

I saw the captain standing in the midst of a group of ladies.

Mrs. Chaplin was looking at him with contempt, Mrs. Leslie in wonder.

My heart beat, my hands trembled, as I looked at him.

I could have struck him down where he stood, but for her sake I restrained myself. I heard Mrs. Chaplin say to him:

"I am told, captain, that Mrs. Hardross was very ill last night with fear. Is it true?"

"Pray, madam, who repeats such idle stories?" he asked, angrily.

"Are they idle? I am glad of it; my maid told me that she heard the poor lady screaming with fear—screaming, too, as though she were in pain."

"Madam," said the captain, "my wife has no reason, no courage, no self-control. I cannot help it if she cries like a frightened child when ever the wind blows."

"You should let her come to my cabin, or at least ask some one to sit with her who would be kind to her."

"Do you mean that I am not kind?" he asked.

"It would not be real kindness to encourage any one in folly that would positively disgrace an imbecile."

"I have said before, and I say again," replied Mrs. Chaplin, "that your wife can neither help nor control her terrible dread of the sea, and to force her on to it is little less than murder."

"You speak frankly, madam," said the captain who had grown pale with rage."

"I speak truthfully," she answered. "Where is Mrs. Hardross?" she continued; and, seeing me, she said, "Good morning, Sir Gordon. Give me your arm and we will find her."

We went to the door of the captain's cabin and I remained outside while Mrs. Chaplin went in.

She and the captain's wife came out together.

At first I hardly dared to look at the face of the unhappy girl.

When I did so it was pale and calm, with a worn, wearied look about the eyes. We shook hands in silence.

I knew that she dared not trust her voice to speak to me.

Mrs. Chaplin talked kindly to her as we walked down the deck together.

"You must not think of leaving the deck this morning, Mrs. Hardross," she said. "Sit down here. I found a very amusing book yesterday amongst my packages. I will go and fetch it. We will have a quiet hour's reading. Sir Gordon will stay with you while I go."

So we got alone watching the sunlight on the sea.

I saw the white hands that had clung in such abject terror to the cruel husband. I longed to take them with tears of pity, as one weeps over an injured child; but I did not—and Heaven knows what it cost me to refrain.

"You were terribly frightened," I then said.

She raised her dark eyes so full of fathomless woe, to mine.

"Yes," she replied; "Now I almost know what it is to die of fear, Sir Gordon." She looked at the glowing amber waves. "I should not be so alarmed at a death that came at once," she said; "but every gust of wind, every creak of the ship's timbers, brings all the horrors of drowning before my mind. I suffer from it, not once, but a hundred times."

It was all true—I knew it. I had seen her struck down because of this great fear of hers.

Infinite pity warmed my heart, but from my lips came no word that should not have been spoken to another man's wife.

I said all I could to cheer and console her.

I told her how in the midst of the storm Mrs. Vann had been overheard scolding her husband for having asked for "hot brandy and water," threatening him with terrible penalties if he did not remember his A's.

She smiled.

Like a winter sunbeam on a lake of ice was that smile, so faint; so sad, so sweet was it.

About her husband she spoke no word. He had been brutally angry with her, he had cursed and struck her, but the patient lips never opened to utter one word against him.

I yield to none in my great reverence for women, but there have been times when even those whom the world calls good women have vexed me by the way in which they have spoken of their husbands.

In my opinion, unless cruelly misused, a wife should never complain, or betray her husband's faults. Laurie Stuart never did. We sat together that morning, but neither then nor ever did she say one word to me about her husband's shortcomings.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Seeing His Friends.

BY RANDALL W. BAYLE.

"AH," said Mr. Jones, as he sat luxuriously sipping his wine.

Mr. Jones was rich, and like the little mouse in the fable, "fared sumptuously every day."

"Ah, dear me, how foolish it is for people to find fault with the world, and say people are ungrateful, and all that.

"It's a very good world, indeed. It's not full of ingrates either.

"It's really very pleasant to find so many friends, as one goes along.

"It's only necessary," said Jones, holding his glass to the light, and letting the light drop through it in a great garnet blot upon the damask cloth, "it's only necessary to be amiable and kind to people, and to be naturally an agreeable person, to be loved and respected and well used.

"As for me who ever had better friends?

"Not to mention the lot of acquaintances who don't count for much.

"There's my Aunt Greenbough, and her nine daughters, as fond of me as though I were a brother.

"Todkinson—how that man respects me; and Cousin Fish and his wife, who really have almost too good an idea of me.

"Ha, ha! think I'm more than perfect.

"And Miss Fyblister, poor thing, perhaps she would have liked me to like her a little more.

"And Amanda—Heaven! how that girl loves me!

"If I were Apollo, she could not admire me more.

"If I were Moses—no, Solomon, she couldn't think me wiser.

"And my servants—my excellent Nehemiah, and my worthy Dinah—how devoted they are.

"And all because I've been generous and good-natured and kind to them all.

"And because I'm a pleasant sort of fellow, not one of your crabbed, crusted creatures."

And Mr. Jones, having finished his wine arose and sauntered towards his great Turkish chair, with vague thoughts of a nap hovering in his brain.

For Mr. Jones was not a boy to whom after-dinner naps are unknown, but a gentleman of six-and-twenty, growing portlier with every year of good living and contentment.

But as Mr. Jones approached his chair, he became conscious that it was not untenanted.

It was occupied by a tall, gaunt figure dressed apparently in cobwebs.

At least the texture of the long gown and cap it wore, suggested nothing else.

It had a face much of the same hue, with a lean, suspicious nose and chin, and furtive eyes of a pale grey.

Its long, lean hands rested together on a staff, and as Mr. Jones approached it cackled, or choked, or something of the sort.

"Ah!" said Mr. Jones to himself, "one of those artistic beggars who make pictures of themselves, I suppose.

"Well, well, I think he's worth a shilling.

"Here, old man—and if you want a drink and something to eat, go to the table and help yourself."

"He, he, he!" rattled the creature in the chair.

"He, he, he! How you make me laugh, to be sure, Aminidab Jones.

"Bah! I always have food enough—I, if no one else on earth."

"Then perhaps you'll tell me what procures me this pleasure," said Mr. Jones, not without sarcasm in his voice.

"I thought I'd look you up," said the figure.

"Very few men I don't know. My name is Suspicion—ever heard it?"

"Well, I don't know," said Mr. Jones, desiring to be polite.

"We've had some odd, old-fashioned names in our family—Prudence, Patience, Experience, Desire—half a dozen others. I've an odd name myself—Aminidab, ha, ha!"

"Yes, and you are an odd man," said the figure.

"To hear you talk, now—to hear you talk!

"Friends! Do you really believe in friends at your age—in fealty, and honor and honesty?

"Don't you know by this time that all people care for you for is what you can do for them, that your money and your pleasant invitations, and your presents, and what they expect you to leave them, make them all so complacent to you, that if you were to become poor, they—bah!

"Don't you suppose you are ever talked against or cheated or ridiculed?"

"No, I don't," said Aminidab Jones; "I deserve it."

"As if that made any difference," cried old Suspicion.

"Why, let the man who has most faith in his friends listen at keyholes, peep in letters, and cross-question servants and other spies for a year, he'll be of my mind. It's a false world, Aminidab, a very false world."

"You're soured my dear sir," said Aminidab. "I'll wager you anything that if I were to listen at keyholes, peep into the letters, and watch the actions of all my friends, I'd feel exactly as I do now at the end of the year."

"I never bet on a certainty," replied Suspicion; "but I'll make you an offer. Come under my mantle; it is large enough to take in all the world, and once covered by it, you will be invisible. Nobody notices me.

"We'll go to your friends—to Aunt Greenbough's, to Todkinson's, to Cousin Fish's, to Miss Fyblister's, and to Amanda's, and see what we shall see. If you are right, I'll go away; If you are not, I'll stay. You'll want me for a friend—eh?"

"I'm right," said Jones; "so put your mantle over me, and let us start. You see I know what I am.

"I know that there's nothing about me for anyone to dislike so. Don't you see?"

"Yes," said Suspicion, "I see. Your vanity is what has kept me from you so. Come on."

Then he whisked him away.

They were in Mrs. Greenbough's parlor.

Aunt Greenbough sat knitting.

Five of the nine daughters were present.

Suspicion lurked in a dark corner, and Mr. Jones peeped through his cobwebby mantle.

"Dear, dear," said Aunt Greenbough. "Dear, dear, what set me thinking about your cousin Aminidab Jones just now?"

"I'm sure I don't know," snapped Miss Lily.

"Why anyone ever thinks of him I can't tell.

"The airs he takes because grandpa left him all his money. I'm sick of him."

"And the idea of his getting married, as they say he is going to be, to that flirty thing," said Miss Sally.

"Why, I thought he was to be a bachelor, and leave us something if he died first."

"Oh, pshaw!" cried Lily. "He pampers himself too much.

"He'll outlive us. But though I can't bear him—never could—it was nice to have someone you could always make a beau of."

"Yes," said Fanny Greenbough, "and one that could afford carriages and all that.

"And why couldn't he marry a woman of his own age, instead of a chit of eighteen?"

"Cousin Aminidab never had any strength of character," drawled Miss Greenbough, an elderly young lady with a nut-cracker chin. "I never had any respect for him."

"And yet she set her cap so hard for me," muttered Aminidab, behind Suspicion's vest.

"Why, I wouldn't have believed it. Come, I've had enough of the Greenboughs.

"I paid the mortgage off their house, and gave the only one that's married her wedding outfit. There, come away."

"To Todkinson's," said Suspicion.

And there they were.

Todkinson was smoking and talking to a friend.

"And that puts me in mind of Jones," said he. "Now Jones is a very fine fellow."

"Told you so," whispered Jones.

"A very fine fellow, but he's commonplace.

"No music in his soul, and obtuse—yes, obtuse and very vain.

"He thinks every woman is in love with him.

"We played him a trick. We told him all the ladies were in love with him. We did indeed.

"And he believed it—ha, ha!—swallowed it.

"Now you know, whatever else he can claim for himself, he's not an Adonis; but if you want to be friends with him, you must pretend to think he is, and that he can play whist too.

"Now he can't play at all, and he's no judge of wine either. He fancies he knows port, but——"

"What does the fellow mean?" began the enraged Jones, but Suspicion at once whisked him away again.

"There are the Fishes," said he. "You true friends. Come, call on them."

At that moment Fish and his wife were at tea, and Jones peering through Suspicion's mantle, heard Mrs. F. say—

"Take another cup of tea, dear."

"I will," said Fish. "I need it. I've toiled since dawn over my weary work."

Fish was literary, and disposed to be dramatic in his language.

"Yes, I have earned my bread by the sweat of my brow, while bloated scions of wealth, such as Jones, have revelled in luxury and idleness.

"Yet, as I passed Jones to-day, I said to myself—Bah!—

"'The coat is but the guinea stamp.
The man's the man for a' that.'"

"I should think so, dear," said Mrs. F. "As if Jones could compare himself with a man of your mind."

"Well, well," said the literary man, smiling on his admiring spouse, "I admit it; and I think I am taller by the head than Jones."

"And ever such a handsomer figure," said his wife.

"And he could not have produced the poems I have, I think?" asked Fish.

"Such verses as those. Oh, the idea!" said Mrs. Fish.

"Then let him keep his gold," said Fish; "let him keep it.

"By the bye, I have an invitation to dine with him."

"Shall we go?" asked the wife.

"Yes, yes," said Fish. "I'll go. I shall see him, so to speak, dissolve pearls in his wine—spend on one pearl what would feed forty poor children for a year, and I shall smile bitterly; but I will go."

"One comfort, dear," said Mrs. Fish, "it's harder for a camel to get through a needle's eye than for a rich man to get to heaven."

"That often does comfort me," said Fish.

"Oh, I shan't jostle against Jones and his kind there."

"I loaned that fellow two and fifty dollars last time we met," muttered Jones.

"Ah!" said Suspicion, "always suspect those you have done favors to first."

Then they flitted to Miss Fyblister's. She was talking to her crony Miss Briggs.

"Oh, no, Anna Maria," said she; "oh, no; I wasn't at all surprised that Jones should propose to Amanda Powers, or someone else, after I refused him."

"What a fib," muttered Jones.

"I wasn't going to give up my independence for a man of no intellect," continued Miss F., "and so I told him.

"'Powers of mind,' says I to him, 'are what I demand in a man who is to be my husband. No,' says I, when he was on his knees."

"I never was," muttered Jones.

"'No,' says I, 'no, indeed. I must marry a great man, one who will make a figure in the world.

"'Will you do anything—be anything?' So, of course, he couldn't say he would, and he went and proposed out of revenge to Amanda Powers."

"Oh, what fibs!" groaned Jones. "Never said a word to her—not a word of anything but friendship."

"Such a little fat roly-poly, with no dignity," said Miss Fyblister, pretending to laugh furiously.

"Dear, dear, and do you know he is ages older than he pretended to be? Dyes his hair, I have heard."

"It's naturally a beautiful black, and I don't lie about my age," muttered Jones.

"And I wouldn't have him, not for all his money," continued the young lady.

"Never had a chance," said Jones.

As he murmured these words he was whisked away.

"Now, shall we go to Amanda's?" asked Suspicion.

"Yes," said Jones. "There we shall find one true heart at least."

"Two," said Suspicion; for there sat Amanda on a sofa, and about her waist an arm, and near her cheek a pair of whiskers just arrived at visible length.

"I shall destroy myself," said a voice behind Whiskers.

"Oh, no, you won't," said Amanda. "You see, I can't marry poor; Pa can't leave me a penny, and though I can't bear him near me——"

"She said she adored me," groaned Jones.

"And though I know I shall feel awful, why, I must have him now. So good-bye Alphonse.

"And, you know, he's a good deal older than I, and I may be a rich widow some day."

"Let me out," cried Jones; but Suspicion wrapped him tight, and flew back to Jones' snug bachelor apartment.

When he unwrapped his grey mantle, Jones was insensible; he had fainted.

When he came to himself it was nearly morning.

The sky was grey, and the cocks were crowing.

He looked about him.

There sat Suspicion all agrin.

"Ah, I'm glad I'm awake," cried Jones. "I've had a bad dream."

"Oh no," said Suspicion, "it was——"

"Hold your tongue!" cried Jones. "See here.

"I know what sort of fellow I am. There's no reason people shouldn't like me. They do.

"No reason people shouldn't love me; she does. Get out."

"Eh!" cried Suspicion. "Then you don't want me to stay?"

"No," said Jones. "Get out."

"It's his vanity," said Suspicion, hobbling away.

"His vanity has saved him. I've shown him the truth, but he can't believe it because he's so vain.

"He'll marry Amanda, and invite his five hundred dear friends to his wedding."

And Jones did.

It was all true enough.

The Greenboughs, and the Fishes, Todkinson, and Miss Fyblister were as ungrateful and talked as badly of him as Suspicion had shown him that they did.

And Amanda had a memory of Alphonse and his whiskers in what she called her heart—and at many a key-hole might Jones have listened, and many a letter might he have opened—as who might not?—with sad results.

But though his vanity left him to be flattered, cajoled and cheated his life through, it saved him from a more awful fate, that of having old Suspicion take up his abode with him. Rather any fate than that.

A STERN REALITY.—The man at the wheel.

Bric-a-Brac.

CHEAP LIBRARIES.—A Boston furniture concern makes bookcases containing asham library, something like "Mrs. Potiphar." The shelves are covered with the works of Shakespeare, Tennyson, Carlyle, and other standard authors, all of which are blocks of wood covered with leather, and bound together so that they cannot be removed. For show, they answer every purpose.

THE LOCK.—A common Chinese talisman is the "hundred families' lock," to procure which a father goes round among his friends and, having obtained from a hundred different parties a few of the copper coins of the country, he himself adds the balance to purchase an ornament or appendage fashioned like a lock, which he hangs on his child's neck for the purpose of figuratively locking him to life and causing the hundred persons to be concerned in his attaining old age.

NOTES.—Silk was manufactured in the United States as long as 1832 by German immigrants living at Economy, Pa. The relative distances of the sun and moon from the earth were first calculated by Aristarchus, about 280 B. C. The ancients were accustomed to place a crescent at the beginning of a book and a crown or something like it at the end. A Hebrew colony landed in Georgia in 1733, and some of the present inhabitants of Savannah are descended from its members.

SNEEZING IN AFRICA.—Among the savage tribes of Africa it is a common notion that kind or hostile spirits make their presence manifest in any particular person by his sneezing. An author in his "Religion of Amanala," tells us how when the Zulu sneezes, he exclaims, "I am now blessed! The ancestral spirit is with me; it has come to me. Let me hasten to salute it, for it is it which causes me to sneeze." The sorcerers, too, are accustomed to sneeze, regarding this not as an indication of the presence of the spirits by whose instrumentality they are supposed to work their magic.

HAD HE BEEN SPARED.—Etienne Prodice, who died the other day at the village of Auroux, France, was an example to all Benedicks, and, had he been spared, the comparison of his second century's experience with the first would have afforded valuable evidence on the pros and cons of matrimony; but, unhappily, he was cut off after eight years of married life. The old gentleman, who was a veteran of the Grand Army, remained in single blessedness till the mature age of 100, when, having thought the matter over carefully, he determined to celebrate his centenary by taking to himself a wife. The bride was a young school mistress of the neighborhood.

BEARS.—Cuvier's bear "was particularly fond of sucking its paws, during which operation it always sent forth a uniform and constant murmur, something like the sound of a spinning wheel." "The sucking of the paw, accompanied by a drumming noise while at rest, and especially after meals, is common to all bears, and during the heat of the day they may often be heard puffing and humming far down in caverns and fissures of rocks." The cause of this has often been speculated on, but Tickell imagines that it is merely a habit peculiar to it, and he states "that they are just as fond of sucking their neighbor's paws or the hands of any person, as their own paws."

RELATIVE VALUES.—Colonel Folsom was reading the morning paper yesterday at the breakfast table, when he exclaimed in a horrified tone of voice, "What a terrible misfortune!" "What is it, somebody got married?" "No but a married woman in New York, in a fit of rage, threw a coffee cup at her husband. The cup was shivered into fragments, and one of them cutting his jugular artery, he died on the spot. The reporter says the grief of the unfortunate woman was dreadful to witness. She was frantic with remorse, and made several attempts to put an end to her existence." "Poor creature," said Mrs. Folsom, with a sigh, "I reckon the broken cup must have belonged to her new china set."

THE STORY OF CINDERELLA.—The story of Cinderella has been variously traced to Italy, France, Arabia, and Egypt; but the general opinion seems to be that the Egyptian version, as told by Strabo and Ælian has the best right to be considered as the original. The Princess Rhodope, about B. C. 670, was bathing, and left her shoes upon the bank of the river. An eagle hovering about in search of prey pounced upon a shoe and, carrying it off to Memphis, dropped it into the lap of King Psammetichus, who was holding a court of justice. The king, struck by the small size and beauty of the shoe, sent forth a proclamation for the owner. In due course the messengers found the girl whereupon the king married her.

AN ENTHUSIASTIC SOLDIER.—Count de la Lippe Birkenbourg, one of the bravest and ablest officers of his day (1720-1774), amused himself with military manœuvres and experiments in his own territories in Germany. One day he invited his little court and visitors to dine with him after a review. The dinner was served in a tent on the ground; and towards the latter end of the repast the count was observed to look several times at his watch and put it up again, and call for another bottle. At last some one asked the reason of this. "Why," said he, "I have ordered this tent to be mined by a new method; it is to be blown up at a certain minute, and I am anxious to go out and see the explosion." The tent, it will readily be believed, was soon cleared, without waiting for the other bottle.

AUTUMN TWILIGHT.

BY JOHN H. HEWITT.

A rainbow sleeps among the trees,
The wind harps murmur in the breeze,
While alone I rest,
And watch the floating vapory fold,
Tinted with red and tipped with gold,
Out in the crimson west.
The monarch sun has sought repose
Behind the hill-tops; softly flows
The brook toward the bay;
While in the twilight may be seen
One little star, with smile serene,
Shooting its silvery ray.

Far off is heard the city's hum,
Breaking the melancholy gloom
Of voiceless vale and trill;
Even the night-bird's song is hushed,
And the dull gurgling strain that gushed
From sparkling brook and hill.
Silence seems eloquent—it speaks,
An echo of the past awakes
Deep in the wand'rer's breast—
Where are the beautiful and fair,
The hours of the past?—say where?
Gone to eternal rest.

Like to the golden hues that linger,
As if sustained by fairy finger
Out in the blushing west,
Are the young joys of life—they seem
Only to be a fleeting dream
That pictures our unrest.
The sun has sunk—the veil of night,
Spangled with stars, blue, red, and white,
Over the scene is spread;
Still mem'ry penetrates the gloom,
Raising grim phantoms of the tomb,
And rev'ling with the dead!

LADY LINTON.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE NEMESIS OF LOVE," "BARBARA GRAHAM," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XVIII.

CORRESPONDENCE.

FROM Mr. Pierce, Monkden, to Mrs. Pierce, Fontainebleau—

"The Swan, Friday.

"Dear Eliza,—I haven't inserted the advertisement, and I don't mean to. I don't like the business, and I sha'n't go on with it.

"There's a candle-manufactory at Marlow to be disposed of, and, though it is not pleasant trade in warm weather, I'd rather devote my energies to that than to ruining the happiness of two unfortunate people by this confounded private inquiry.

"You must have a heart as hard as Lady Macbeth's to look upon the abounding love of sweet little Lady L. and the yearning affection of her husband and calmly lay your plans for blasting their lives and making them miserable for ever.

"I'd forgive Bluebeard himself if he showed for his last wife such earnest and tender feelings as you ascribe to Sir G.

"I do remember that expression upon poor Tom's face when he heard that he had only a week more to look upon his poor girl's face and hear her voice.

"If Sir G. has such an expression as that then my heart's with him, and confusion to his enemies, say I.

"You will do me the kindness, Eliza, to come home as soon as you can, and let me know how we are to manage with Mrs. G.

"I don't suppose she will expect us to give her the fifty back.

"It will be as well to retire from the business as decently as we can.

"Any way, if we have to give her the fifty pounds, there will still be enough, if we sell out of the building society and raffle the piano, to get the candle-factory, which I am told will be worth double the money when the hot months are over.

"I think you had better write to Mrs. G.

"You can tell her that my inquiries here have not yielded the results we expected; and this you can do truthfully.

"I find that the landlord of the 'Chub and Float' is one of the greatest liars in Berkshire—which is saying a good deal, especially in this part of it, where a man never lands a gudgeon without swearing he has caught a trout—the stories he has told me about barbel-catching prove how little his word is to be relied on.

"I have found nothing reliable to add to what I told you in my last; and, as that was false, you may safely write to Mrs. G. that further inquiry is useless.

"I shall wait here until I receive your answer to this, and then return to town, have in the broker from the bottom of Endell Street to repurchase the office-furniture, and close the show.

"Yours affectionately.

"Jos. Pierce."

From Mrs. Pierce, Fontainebleau, to Mr. Pierce, Monkden—

"Valvins, May 6.

"Dear P.,—If you are not quite a fool, you will have nothing to do with the candle-manufactory.

"You will live in it alone if you do take it.

"I defy you to raffle the piano. It is legally mine.

"You are welcome to do whatever else you please—close the office, sell the desk, and the rest, and welcome.

"I can conduct the business better perhaps without you.

"One thing is certain—I shall not defraud our client by retiring from an undertaking to which we are solemnly pledged by an inland revenue stamp.

"I have sent the advertisement with a mandat de poste to the London papers, and I have written to Mrs. Gower.

"Irrespective of my feelings, you will see the necessity of doing nothing to make Sir G. acquainted with the inquiry I am making.

"If you speak, you will oblige me to give Lady L. an explanation of my conduct. Your letter containing the account of a conversation with your friend of the 'Chub and Float' will suffice.

"The only chance of happiness Sir Gilbert and his wife have is in my failure and Lady L's. ignorance of this inquiry.

"I have no wish to 'b—t their lives,' as you profanely put it.

"I only desire to see justice done and provide the means of subsistence for ourselves which your energies, devote them as you will, have hitherto failed to procure.

"Yours, "E. Pierce.

"P.S.—You need not trouble yourself to call upon aunt Sarah. I have written to her, and she will forward to me whatever is sent there in answer to the advertisements."

From Y. Z., Post-office, Southampton, to A. B., care of Mrs. Giles, King's Square—

"May 10, 188—.

"To A. B.,—I am instructed on behalf of Sophia Kirby to inquire what advantage is referred to by the advertisement which appeared in the *Times* of yesterday, May 9. Please communicate in the first instance with

"Y. Z., Post-office, Southampton."

From A. B., London, to Y. Z. Southampton—

"May 12.

"To Y. Z.,—A reward of one hundred pounds will be paid to Sophia Kirby if she furnishes within ten days such evidence concerning the murder of the late Lady Linton as shall lead to the conviction of Sir Gilbert Linton, now residing at Valvins, Fontainebleau, France.

"A personal interview with Sophia Kirby is desired, and she is requested to appoint time and place for a strictly private meeting.

"A. B."

From Mrs. Pierce, Fontainebleau, to Mrs. Gower, London.

"Valvins, Fontainebleau, May 12.

"Dear Madam,—My partner in London, Mr. J. Pierce, being wholly occupied in procuring evidence concerning the relations which existed between Sir Gilbert Linton and Sophia Kirby antecedent to the date of the late Lady Linton's death, I take upon myself the duty of acquainting you with the progress we are making in the commission with which you have honored us.

"We have obtained, not without considerable risk and difficulty, a copy of the diary kept by the present Lady Linton—formerly Miss Graham—which gives evidence (1) that she is guiltless of any complicity in the murder of the late Lady Linton—a most important fact, which precludes the disastrous consequences of wrongly accusing a person whose innocence could be proved to our confusion.

"(2) that Sir Gilbert Linton was passionately enamored of her while his first wife alive.

"(3) that he offered to abandon his wife for Miss Graham's sake.

"(4) that, after her refusal, he meditated on getting rid of his wife as the only means of realizing his desires with regard to Miss Graham.

"(5) that, after getting rid of his wife, he did not at once go to Miss Graham and repeat the offer he had previously urged so passionately, which was the natural course for an innocent man to take.

"(6) that it was with a desperate disregard to consequences that he at length resolved to marry Miss Graham.

"(7) that, to escape those consequences, he proposed to leave England and lead a roving life—the best calculated to avoid a meeting with his accomplice, Sophia Kirby.

"(8) that he recognised at once an enemy in the yacht that pursued him from Dover.

"(9) that the woman seen upon the pursuing yacht was to be neither bribed nor frightened from her pursuit, as shown by her persistence in following Sir Gilbert after the interview he obtained with her at Cherbourg.

"And that (10) she was to be feared, and at all hazards to be prevented from encountering his wife, clearly demonstrated by the ignominious ruse practiced at St. Malo, the flight to Paris, and subsequent residence in an obscure village on the Seine.

"These facts led us at once to the conclusion that the woman so strenuously avoided was Sophia Kirby, and that she was not wholly guilty of the murder.

"Had Sir Gilbert been guiltless, he would beyond doubt have handed her over to the police instead of making his escape from her.

"Our next efforts were to discover the exact relation which existed between Sir Gilbert Linton and Sophia Kirby prior to the murder.

"We succeeded in finding that she was something more to him than a paid servant, and that their connection extended back to a date earlier than that of Sir Gilbert's first meeting with Miss Graham.

"Mr. J. Pierce is at the present moment prosecuting this branch of the inquiry with unrelaxed energy, and we may confidently hope to obtain further and conclusive evidence before long.

"At the same time, we have been seeking Sophia Kirby; and I am happy to inform you that we are now in direct communication with her.

"It is contrary to our principles to disclose the proceedings we intend to take; but confidence in your complete secrecy and discretion permits me to indicate the course we intend to pursue in this case.

"We shall intimate to Sophia Kirby the hiding-place of Sir Gilbert.

"If our conclusions are just, she will avail herself of this information to seek him at once here at Valvins.

"The result of their meeting may be the immediate denunciation of Sir Gilbert or a secret compromise.

"In either case the conviction of Sir Gilbert is inevitable.

"Though in the latter it may be for a time postponed.

"Rest assured, madam, that I shall acquaint myself with all the particulars which can contribute to a satisfactory conclusion of our inquiry, and that I shall not neglect to apprise you of the facts as they occur.

"Believe me, madam,

"Yours respectfully and obediently,

"E. Pierce.

"P.S.—Kindly address all communications to E. Pierce, poste restante, Vulaines-sur-Seine, Seine-et-Marne."

From Mrs. Gower, London, to Mrs. Pierce Fontainebleau—

"Mrs. Gower writes to express her entire satisfaction with the manner in which Messrs. Pierce & Pierce have conducted their inquiries on her behalf, and also her confidence in their integrity and business ability.

"Mrs. Gower encloses a cheque for the amount due to Messrs. Pierce & Pierce to present date.

"Gauntly House, May 14, 188—."

CHAPTER XIX.

LITTLE Lady Linton sat in her salon. The windows of the bow-front were thrown wide open, for summer had come early to Valvins, where the wooded hills afforded shelter.

There were heavy clusters of roses upon the trellis of the varandah.

The beds upon the lawn were brilliant with geraniums.

The grass in the paddock beyond was up to the knees of the dun cow, and Gertie could see only the back of the old goat as she steadily browsed, and the heads of her young when they frisked and leapt.

The acacias that bounded the forest were white with bloom, and the air was sweet with the fragrance.

Gertie was alone, stitching.

A dainty little work-table stood between her and the verandah, so that when she paused in her work to get a fresh length of cotton she could look out over her garden and paddock and see the silver river between the tall poplars on the right.

That was just what she was doing when her ear caught the sound of her voice humming a tune.

In a moment she slipped her work into the well of the little table, closed the top, and, folding her arms upon it, leaned forward with her head a little on one side, and looked out in the direction from which the sound had come, her eyes prettily twinkling with pleasure and her cheeks just tinged with a blush.

Gilbert strolled over the lawn with a garden-basket in his hand, and came towards the house.

The morning sun was in his eyes when he looked towards the salon, and he failed to see Gertie.

Still humming, he paused under the verandah and plucked a couple of half-opened rose-buds.

Then, having laid them in the basket, he was about to stroll off towards the terrace, when a little pearly laugh told him that the object of his search was close at hand and observing him.

"You there, Gertie?" he said, turning back.

He came into the room, taking off his soft felt hat, and laid the rose-buds on the table.

Gertie leaned back in her chair and stretched her arms upwards in silence, looking into his face with a beseeching love in her eyes and lips.

He stood over her for a moment, then bent down, and she clasped her hands upon his neck and held him prisoner.

When he was released, he drew a chair near her and seated himself.

"Found half a dozen strawberries," he said, putting the basket in her lap. "I intended them as a bribe.

"But somehow they don't seem quite adequate to the purpose now."

"What purpose?"

"Thought I might tempt you to go out."

"I can't walk very far, dear," she said, her cheek and neck flushing with a deeper pink.

"No necessity. Sit in the boat, and I'll row you—lounge in the chaise, and I'll drive you. It's a heavenly morning."

"So it is, love." She took the basket from her lap, as if to rise. "Where shall we go?"

"What does that matter to you?" he asked after looking at her for a moment in silent devotion.

"If I asked you to go to the North Pole, you'd consent, and think it the pleasantest promenade in the world.

"Sit down, Gertie; there's no hurry. It's as pleasant here as elsewhere perhaps."

He threw his arm over the back of the chair and talked of trifles—of matters concerning the garden and the stable, and their projects for the summer—and she gave herself up to the pleasure of an idle chat, eating now and then a strawberry from the basket he had brought her, laughing lightly at his jokes, and thinking that surely no one on earth could talk so charmingly as he who found without effort something pleasant to say upon whatever subject he discussed, and paid her a hundred graceful compliments without seeming to seek for one.

She had thought him perfect in the old time, when his manner was often cynical and hard.

But, ah, he was far more lovable now that his bearing was gentler and more sweet!

And the change was more delightful to her because it arose from his greater happiness.

They gossiped for half an hour, and then, changing his position, he perceived a reel of cotton at his feet.

He picked it up carelessly, and was about to lift the top of the work-table, when she, with a little cry of alarm, put her hands upon it and held it down.

"Ah," he said, with a little look of surprise, "you too, Gertie, have a secret!"

She nodded, smiling and blushing at the time.

"Thank Heaven, it's a happy one!" he said, rising and looking down at her with tender earnestness.

"I see now why you did not want to go out."

"I did not say I wished to stay at home."

"I found that out for myself. I shall ride over to Marlotte; that will give you three or four hours to gloat over your secret."

He stooped down to kiss her.

"Aren't you jealous?" she asked, holding his head between her hands and looking into his eyes.

"Not a bit."

"And aren't you burning with curiosity to know what it is you mustn't see?"

"Men are superior to that sort of feeling, you know."

Gertie still held him, and seemed to be rather disappointed at his lack of interest.

"Wouldn't you like to see just a tiny morsel of it?" she asked.

"Come to look at it in that light, I think I should."

In joyful haste, tempered with elaborate caution, she opened the work-table a few inches, peeped in, and then drew out about four inches of a marvellous little cambric sleeve.

"Good Heaven, Gertie," said he, after regarding it in perplexity for a moment, as he sank into his chair, "you don't mean to hint that you still go in for dolls!"

"Dolls!" she exclaimed, with an accent of supreme disgust.

More perplexed than ever, Gilbert looked from his wife to the little sleeve, touched it, and lifted his eyes again to Gertie's flushed face.

Then, as a ray of intelligence flushed upon his mind, he dropped the sleeve which he held between his thumb and finger, and, leaning forward, took her hand, and said very softly—

"Is my little wife to be a mother?"

She snatched her hand from his, flung her arms round his neck, and pressed her burning cheek to his for reply.

Gilbert had been gone quite a long time.

Gertie's radiant face was bent over the work.

Her nimble fingers drew the thread with such care as the most delicate embroidery might require.

The door behind her opened, and Mrs. Pierce entered the room and approached her mistress with the noiseless step and restrained bearing of a well-trained servant.

Mrs. Pierce was a slight wiry woman of about forty years, dressed in a plain black gown and rigid cuffs and collar and a white apron and cap.

Her appearance was particularly neat.

Her hair seemed to be cemented to her head.

Her complexion was dark, her nose straight and sharp, her upper lip long and divided from the lower by the straight and faintly perceptible line of her mouth.

Every movement was very painfully precise.

Only her little stone-gray eyes seemed capable of precipitate and irregular motion.

"Will her ladyship be good enough to instruct me with regard to the dinner?" she asked, adopting the correct manner of French servants.

Gertie laid her work in her lap and discussed the subject at some length, choosing this plate and rejecting that as she considered her husband's taste.

Occasionally Mrs. Pierce made a respectful suggestion, which was invariably good.

The admirable servant seemed to know her master's tastes as well as Gertie herself, and her excellent memory furnished her with good alternatives.

If one thing was not to be had, another would serve as well.

She opposed nothing, but contrived to make everything possible.

While the question was yet in her consideration, the visitors' bell rang.

Gertie received so few visits that the sound of the bell was a matter of importance to her.

Instinctively she raised the top of her

work-table to put away her work, half rising from her chair.

Mrs. Pierce shot a glance through the window as far as her eye could reach in the direction of the visitors' entrance and back again to her mistress.

Otherwise she did not move a muscle.

"That was the visitors' bell, Pierce."

"Yes, madam. Would her ladyship like me to ascertain who has called?"

"Yes, by all means. Philippe of course knows what to do; but you can bring me the card."

Mrs. Pierce left the room, and Gertie began to pick off some threads of cambric that clung to her dress, in case she had to see the visitor.

Possibly it was M. de Clameran, or some other friend of her husband's.

It seemed a long time between Pierce's going and her return.

At length she came into the room, closed the door behind her, crossed with her customary precision to where Gertie stood, and said—

"The lady has not a card——"

"No, madam. The lady desired to see Sir Gilbert. Her name is Miss Drummond."

"She is English?"

"Yes, madam. I told Miss Drummond that Sir Gilbert was absent, and that I would inform you of her presence. She is in the morning-room."

"That will do, Pierce. I will see the lady at once. I think we have settled about dinner."

"Yes, madam."

Pierce crossed the room and opened the door.

Gertie passed out, wondering who this visitor was whose name she had never heard her husband mention.

She crossed the vestibule and with a timid hand—she was nervous, she knew not why—opened the door of the morning-room.

She entered the room so noiselessly that the sound did not disturb Miss Drummond who, standing in the middle of the room with her back to the door, was evidently examining the luxurious apartment critically.

Gertie stood still for a moment, only just able to form some idea of the visitor from that brief glance.

Except that she was taller and broader than most Frenchwomen, the visitor looked more like a Parisienne than an Englishwoman.

There was something strongly suggestive of the Boulevard des Italiens in her hat, with its over-abundant garniture of feathers and fruit in the elaborately-ornamented mantle that nipped her elbows into her waist, in the stiff silk skirt trained out behind, with its border of white balayeuse.

Gertie dared hardly whisper to herself as she closed the door that her husband's acquaintance seemed rather showy than ladylike.

Miss Drummond heard the door shut, and turned round at once, with a kick at her train.

Gertie loved the fashions as well as any woman, and to her one of the chief attractions of Paris was its parade of richly-dressed women.

Yet the pleasure she found in looking at them she lacked in regarding Miss Drummond, and this notwithstanding that she was considerably better-looking than the generality of Frenchwomen, and that nothing could have been richer or more costly than the dress she wore.

The thing which spoilt all was the expression in Miss Drummond's face, and something in her manner which was not ladylike.

She was like an actress who, over-acting her part, destroys the illusion she would create.

Miss Drummond's hair, dressed in the latest style of Sarah Bernhardt, was a little too golden, her skin too fair, her lips were too red, her eyebrows too dark, and an air intended to be haughty, being overdone, became simply impudent, an effect heightened by a pince-nez which, worn rather low on her nose, compelled her to throw her head back before she could fairly see Lady Linton.

She stepped forward to meet Gertie, swaying her skirts from side to side, and with one hand extended as far as the mantle which confined her arm allowed.

"My dear Lady Linton," she said, making two syllables of the word "dear," "so happy to know you—so very happy!"

Gertie replied in formal terms, wondering where it was she had previously heard the letter "h" aspirated with such intensity.

"What a charming spot you have chosen to live in, and what an elegant little house!"

Again Gertie replied with a stock phrase.

She remembered now that the young lady at the milliner's in Regent Street, where Gilbert had taken her, aspirated her "h's" and cut her diphthongs in half.

"And how is dear old Bertie?" asked Miss Drummond.

"Bertie!" echoed little Lady Linton, in amaze.

"Pardon me. I suppose I ought to call him 'Gilbert' now.

"We were old sweethearts, you know."

"Indeed I don't know. My husband has never, to my knowledge, mentioned your name to me."

"Oh, the odious monster! I will punish him for this.

"He shall not have a moment's peace until he has apologized to both of us."

"My husband apologizes to no one."

"Not even when he does any one wrong?"

"He never does wrong."

"Oh, you sweet dear charming little innocent!

"Don't you see that in this very matter he has wronged you most horridly? I am not seeking a compliment, you know."

If she had been, she would not have been likely to get one from Gertie at that moment.

"No," she said; "I see nothing of the kind.

"He has wronged you by treating you as a child, and supposing you would be jealous and hurt to find that he wasn't immaculate.

"Oh, these men! They think that every woman they love is a fool to be cheated by their professions, or deceived by their silence.

"As if we didn't know what they do behind our backs, and were blind to the facts that stare us in the face!

"Perhaps it's well, my dear, to let them go on thinking we are fools, or they might cease to love us."

Miss Drummond had seated herself in a causeuse, and spoke, with her head leaning on the back, swinging her feet to and fro carelessly as she stared with half-closed eyes at Gertie.

Gertie sat and listened in a state of bewilderment, with a feeling of anger gnawing at her heart.

What was she to do? How was she to reply?

She felt as though she had been suddenly transported out of her own world into one where the customs and language had all to be learnt before she could understand her position.

Miss Drummond seemed like the vulgar woman in that book of "Ouida's" which she had read.

But perhaps she was a fair specimen of the class to which Gilbert belonged, and in which she must take her place.

She remembered that "Ouida's" most vulgar and unpleasant women were represented as being superior to middle-class people.

Perhaps Miss Drummond was only indulging in a kind of persiflage that did not represent her real feelings.

One thing was certain—she must repress her anger, whether it was well or ill-founded, and receive her husband's friend with becoming civility.

"I do not expect Gilbert to return for some hours," she said, with a little twitching at the corner of her lips, which was the nearest approach to a smile she could assume. "You will stay to dinner?"

"Thanks—very much, thanks! I came with the intention of staying if I found you agreeable.

"It would be a very poor compliment if I didn't carry out my intention now I have told you that."

"You are very kind," murmured Lady Linton, her heart failing at the prospect. "Is your carriage coming?"

"There are two or three boxes and my dressing-case at Fontainebleau — Hotel d'Angleterre—if you will send one of your people for them, so that I may have a decent dress for dinner. I know how particular Bertie is.

"It is right he should be, for I consider nothing more despicable than an ill-dressed woman, except an ill-dressed man. Men have no excuse.

"I should consider it an insult if a man sat down at table with me in anything but evening-dress."

"Gilbert finds evening-dress comfortable, otherwise I don't think he would wear it. He dines in his shooting-jacket when he feels indisposed to trouble himself with dressing, or is tired with walking."

"I would allow no excuse, my dear. Men presume upon privileges of that kind, and dislike you for permitting them.

"Why do ninety-nine men out of a hundred prefer the society of other women to their wives?

"Simply because the wives are foolish enough to permit a certain degree of familiarity which nauseates them. I admit, however, that leniency was the fault of your predecessor."

"My predecessor?"

"Bertie's first wife, my dear."

"Ah, you knew Lady Linton?"

They were in the bedroom now.

And Miss Drummond, standing at the toilet-table, was trying one after the other of the scent-flacons.

She inhaled a long whiff of White Rose, and replied:

"Yes, I knew her very well."

"You visited at the Abbey?"

Miss Drummond, still smelling the bottle, closed her eyes and inclined her head, her lips a little parted, drawn back, and showing a line of white teeth.

Gertie wondered if it was at the Abbey, and during his wife's lifetime, that Miss Drummond and Gilbert had been sweethearts.

And, with a feeling akin to shame, she recalled the love-passage which had taken place between herself and him in Monkden woods.

"Bertie was horribly bothered there; but it improved him. Men with bad wives are always interesting.

"They feel it necessary to be on their best behavior with other women, you know. There's a certain fascination about them that's irresistible. Haven't you found it so, dear?"

She had seated herself with the flacon, and, still inhaling the perfume, looked at Gertie.

"I have had very little experience," stammered Gertie, turning red. "Perhaps that is why I find the subject not a very pleasant one."

"Do you wish me to think the subject is unpleasant to you?"

"Certainly I do."

"Excuse me if I find it difficult to believe. My observation has led me to believe that it is the only subject that has any interest to women.

"All others are more or less agreeable as they bear upon that one theme of the relation between men and women."

Gertie made some commonplace rejoinder, and then, anxious to escape, changed the subject, and left the room to despatch a cart to Fontainebleau for Miss Drummond's baggage.

That done, she went into the salon and sat down, with her hands in her lap, to think it all over and so arrange her ideas that she might be able to get through the day without making a fool of herself, and giving Gilbert cause to regret her want of worldly wisdom.

She heard the tinkle of a bell, and shortly afterwards Pierce came into the room, with her noiseless step and rigid composure.

"If you please, your ladyship, Miss Drummond desires some sherry."

CHAPTER XX.

IT was five o'clock when Gilbert returned from Marlotte.

As he passed the terrace he caught a glimpse, through the shrubbery, of a light costume under the verandah, and raised his hat.

He rode in by the stable entrance, threw himself from his horse, and went round by the lawn.

A little way from the window he met his wife.

"Why, Gertie, what is the matter?" were his first words, as he took her hand in his and looked at her keenly.

A few hours since he had left her radiant with happiness.

He found her now with an expression of fatigue and constraint on her face, as though she had suffered greatly and wished to conceal it from him.

"Nothing, dearest," she answered faintly.

And then, after a hasty glance behind her, as if it to assure herself that she was not observed, she nestled herself against his breast to conceal her ill-disguised emotion.

He felt her body trembling under his hands, and led her away to a seat in the shadow of the house.

"Come now, my love, what is it?" he asked, drawing her close to him when they were seated.

"Oh, I'm a goose—that's all, dear!" she said, trying to laugh. "We mustn't sit here. Go into the library, please; there's a surprise for you."

"Not an agreeable one, I should say, by the look of things," he returned. "It's a sufficient surprise to find you so changed since we parted. I don't want another of the same kind. Let me know what I am to expect?"

"Your cousin has come to see us," she answered.

"My cousin!" he exclaimed slowly, in a tone of wonder.

"Miss Drummond. She arranged it all. I didn't think you would care very much to be surprised in that way. But, as she said it would be a pleasant surprise for you, and she being your cousin, and our visitor, I couldn't object."

"My cousin—Miss Drummond!" Gilbert repeated, in a voice which was scarcely audible.

"She was stopping at a hotel at Fontainebleau, on her way to Monaco; and, hearing there that we lived so close, she thought it would be—be—'awfully nice,' she said, to come and stay with us for two or three weeks."

Gilbert said not a word, but the arm that surrounded his wife's waist twitched convulsively.

"Of course, dearest, I am very much pleased, indeed, that your cousin—that any one you like should come to see you and stay with us," Gertie said earnestly. "I am only troubled because I begin to see how far removed I am from the class of society to which you belong—because I see how childish and silly I must look beside the women who know the world better than I do—because I can't converse about the ordinary topics of good society, or even understand them, and so must sit silent and stupid-looking when I ought to be entertaining and bright."

Gilbert said not a a word to encourage his wife.

He only drew her a little closer to his breast.

Gertie was glad he did not speak.

It gave her an opportunity to say all that she had on her mind.

The pressure of his loving arm gave her confidence in his sympathy and tolerance.

"You see, dear," she pursued, "I have never known any grand people, except you.

"You are so different from all the world."

She broke off to raise her face and kiss his beard.

"I have mixed only with very simple people—the peasants at Neufbourg, and Mrs. Simpson at Kennington—and I have naturally fallen into their way of looking at things; and now, being brought suddenly into the society of such a lady as your cousin, and having to remodel everything in my mind, I felt as if a long lesson were set before me to master all at once."

"Where is she?" asked Gilbert, when Gertie ceased to speak.

"In the library, dear."

His left hand was on her lap; she lifted it gently to her lips.

He seemed not to notice it.

"I am glad to tell you this, dear," she went on, stroking his hand tenderly—"not that I think you would misunderstand me if I hadn't told you.

"You love me so that you would never doubt my wish to be pleasant to your friends, however stupid and dull I might seem, would you?"

"Oh, that's all right!" he answered vaguely, just catching the intonation of voice that indicated an inquiry; then, removing his arm from her waist, he threw himself forward, with his broad back bent and his elbows resting on his knees.

Gertie, looking at him sidelong, saw that his eyes were fixed on the waving poplars, the shining leaves of which rustled ceaselessly in the breeze.

His lips were tightly compressed and his nostrils expanded.

There was something in his face which filled the wife's jealous heart with an exultant belief that, however fond he had been at one time of his cousin, he was displeased to renew the acquaintance.

"Well, we must get rid of her somehow!" he muttered, recovering himself suddenly; and then, rising to his feet, he asked once again, "Where is she?"

"In the library, dear.

"Miss Drummond wished her boxes to be sent for; and Philippe brought them in the light cart."

"Ah, then he can take 'em back again in the light cart! What o'clock? Half-past five? What time have you fixed for dinner?"

"Six."

"I'll tell Louise to put it back as I go through the house.

"It's all right, Gertie.

"You go and stroll in the forest till I come and find you; take Pierce with you. I have a fancy for some wood-strawberries; see if you can find me some."

He kissed her, and walked of under the verandah and into the house, with his hands in his pockets.

Gertie sat down, marvelling what her husband's intentions were, yet with a wonderful feeling of relief and a grateful sense of reliance on his strength and wisdom.

Presently Pierce came out, carrying a flower-basket and a garden-hat for her mistress.

The admirable woman's features were a little more pinched than usual—the only sign that ever betrayed declination of a service required of her.

Gertie searched the banks until her basket was half full of strawberries and she felt fatigued; then she sat down within sight of the house and waited for Gilbert's coming.

When at length he appeared upon the path leading up into the forest, she dismissed Pierce, and went forward to meet him.

His eyes were upon the ground, yet, to the wife's eager observation there appeared, even at that distance, a look upon his face which alarmed her.

Perhaps there had been an unpleasant scene between him and his cousin.

He quickened his step and smiled as he caught sight of her.

"I've been a long time, Gertie, haven't I?" he said, taking her hand and passing it under his arm.

"The fact is, I undertook a task that just goes beyond my power.

"I've been trying all this time to get her to go, and she won't."

"I don't see why you set yourself the task, dear."

"Oh, that's explained easily enough! She's vulgar and coarse, and there's not a single pleasant quality in her."

A sigh of satisfaction escaped from Gertie.

She found herself looking at Miss Drummond's visit in a much more cheerful spirit now.

"Miss Drummond had the good taste to like your society, or she wouldn't have been so anxious to stay—that's one merit," she said, laughing.

"I wish she had the good taste to leave a house where she sees she's not wanted," Gilbert rejoined uneasily.

"Perhaps she did not see it. You couldn't be rude to a lady; and I don't think you could try to be."

"No, that's it, you know," he said, catching at the excuse quickly. "A man can say straight out what he thinks to another man; but it's different with a woman, isn't it?"

"Certainly, dear. And I don't see why you should wish to get rid of Miss Drummond—at once.

"Variety, even if it isn't quite the kind one most likes, is pleasant.

"Here you have no one to talk to but me, and you may find it agreeable to gossip with someone you have known formerly about old times, and so on."

At another time Gilbert would have laughed heartily at his wife's thinly-veiled jealousy; now he replied in a serious vein, telling her that he had no wish to talk of old times, but preferred to live entirely in the better age that had begun with his marriage.

It pleased Gertie to hear that, though she had heard it before; and, pressing his arm in grateful acknowledgment, she continued, with still rising spirits—

"It was wrong to say anything to prejudice you against your cousin; I did not mean to do so.

"I only feared that I might appear rathe

insignificant and silly, sitting beside that great handsome woman who talks so freely and fluently."

"Heaven preserve you from ever having anything in common with that woman!" Gilbert said, with fervor.

"Don't you think you judge her rather severely, dear?

"A great many people who strike us at first as being not quite nice reveal, after a while, certain qualities that command respect, and sometimes admiration."

"To be sure they do.

"And, even if this woman doesn't improve, I dare say we can manage to put up with her vulgarity and unpleasantness for a few weeks.

"At the end of that time, if she doesn't run away from us, we can manage to run away from her—take another cruise in the Tub, something of that sort."

"I don't think we shall have to do that: at least, I hope not, unless you quite wish it."

She had so pictured her baby learning its first steps on the smooth lawn among the flowers and sweet surroundings of this house, that the vision was too delightful to abandon readily.

"I think I shall like Miss Drummond when I know her better.

"I shall certainly do all I can to make her like me.

"Besides, we shall find many opportunities of being alone together, you and I. I should think she would soon get tired of our quiet ways.

"At all events, she must leave us some day."

Gilbert shrugged his shoulders, with a short uneasy laugh, and then became suddenly stern as the turn of the path brought into sight the house, with Miss Drummond seated under the verandah and displaying a liberal extent of scarlet silk stocking.

Gertie had never seen such a morose expression on her husband's face; but, with Miss Drummond's red stocking and her large bare white arms and shoulders flashing in the distance, she would possibly have been less contented to see her husband looking otherwise.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

Her Crime Atoned.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE NEMESIS OF LOVE" "VERA," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER V.—[CONTINUED.]

BE at ease, then. No inducement in the world would be strong enough to make me breathe a hint of it!"

Quite unconscious of the strangeness of the action he put his hands on her shoulders and looked keenly into her eyes.

"Thank you," he said simply. "Yes, I feel I need have no fear of you."

He hesitated for a moment; then, a deep shamed red rising to his brow, he added in a still lower voice—

"For your own satisfaction I will add it is a secret that will not dishonor either you or myself by the keeping."

After that they went silently downstairs to Fraulein, and, the storm being over, they set out for home, Gordon accompanying them as far as the gate leading to the shrubbery.

This time Vivien held out her hand, and he took it, and retained it a moment in his, looking the while very earnestly into her face.

The young girl went home, feeling that a kind of bond had been forged between them through this mutual secret—a secret that she thought of and puzzled over a great deal, but which she felt sure would be nevertheless justified, if she only knew the circumstances that made it very necessary.

* * * * * *

Roy did not return with Trevor Etheredge to the Court that evening, for he had met some friend and gone home to dinner with him.

Thus it happened that Vivien and her cousin dined alone.

To Trevor there seemed something different in the young girl to-night, a certain excitement of manner that made the color in her cheeks deeper, the light in her eyes brighter, and which lent her an added charm.

For some fancy she had fastened a bunch of geranium in her hair, and another at her throat, and contrasted with her black silks and laces.

The scarlet flowers were very effective, and completed a toilette that showed off the pure tints of her skin to the utmost perfection.

Indeed, Trevor thought he had never seen her look so lovely, and the spell of her fairness made the blood course through his veins as if he were under the influence of strong wine.

He swore to himself he would hesitate at nothing in his endeavor to make this radiant young beauty his own.

As soon as they reached the drawing-room Vivien seated herself in a low arm-chair, and took up a magazine—not to read, however, for her eyes fixed themselves on the fire, and she soon lost herself in a maze of retrospective wonderings concerning the events of the afternoon.

She was presently aroused by Trevor.

"You are very quiet this evening, Vivien."

"Am I? I beg your pardon then, for it is my duty to try and amuse you, and make up for Roy's absence. It is dull when he is away."

"Do you think so? I don't agree with you and I am particularly glad he is not here to-night, for I have something to say to you that could hardly be said in the presence of a third person."

"To me?" Vivien repeated, knitting her pretty brows together, but perfectly oblivious of what his speech inferred. "I wonder what it is."

"Can't you guess?" he said, coming over to her and resting his arm on the back of her chair, while he leaned down to look into her face.

"Do you think a man can live in the same house with you, see you daily, hold constant intercourse with you, and yet remain unmoved by your beauty?

"If so, you are mistaken, for I have learned to love you deeply, passionately, and I want now to ask you to be my wife."

She drew back in astonishment—almost anger; and there was only surprise—no shadow of love—in the eyes she raised to his.

"Your wife!" she exclaimed. "Oh, no! I have never even thought of you in any light but that of a friend and relative."

And this was true.

Had it been otherwise she would not have treated him with the candor and unreserve that had hitherto marked her conduct, and while he had interpreted more in accordance with his own wishes than as his knowledge of human nature should have taught him.

"But you will learn to look on me in a different way, Vivien!" he exclaimed eagerly, kneeling by her side, and forcibly taking her hand in his.

"Such love as mine must compel a return and if you will only let me have the chance of proving how dear you are to me, I feel sure you will soon yield me your heart."

She shook her head, her eyes filling with tears.

"No, Trevor, slight as has been my experience, I know love must come of itself—nothing will ever force it, and if you were to try for a hundred years, you could not make me care for you in any other way than I do now.

"Pray don't speak of it again—let us both forget this conversation has taken place."

"Forget it! You don't know what you are talking of, Vivien.

"Mine is not a boy's first fancy that a breath will extinguish, but the passion of a man, which will never be satisfied until it obtains its object!" he exclaimed, almost roughly.

"Don't send me from you, darling—no man in the world will ever care for you more than I do."

She made a forcible effort, and wrenched her hands from his grasp.

"It can never be, Trevor, never. I neither love you now, nor could I do so in the future."

Etheredge rose to his feet, a dark frown coming on his brow.

It was true he had conceived a passion for her, but he was an excessively vain man and this refusal of hers both galled his pride, and hurt his vanity.

He to sue in vain to a girl who had only just left the schoolroom!

Half-an-hour ago the idea would have seemed to him preposterous.

"Then do you mean that you absolutely decline my proposal—that you will not even take time to think it over?" he said, compressing his lips.

"It would be of no avail if I did; at the end of twelve months my feelings would be exactly the same as they are now."

"Then this is your final decision?"

"Yes, final and irrevocable," she answered weary of his importunity.

"Not the latter, Vivien, perhaps," he said a curious smile on his lips, as he drew a chair close to her side and seated himself.

"I have a communication to make to you which may possibly induce you to alter it, after all.

"Before I tell you what it is, let me say that it should never have passed my lips if you had listened favorably to my suit, only desperate cases like mine require desperate remedies.

"Stay," he added, laying his hand on her arm, and detaining her as she was about rising—

"You must pardon me if I insist on your giving me a hearing—afterwards you may go or stay as you like."

The young girl shook off his hold, and then prepared to listen, for, to say the truth she was somewhat curious to know the gist of the communication on which he appeared to lay such stress.

"To begin then, you will remember, Vivien, that I came to England as soon as I could after receiving the intelligence of your father's death.

"The object of my coming was a specific one, being neither more nor less than that of claiming the Etheredge estates."

"Claiming the Etheredge estates?" she echoed, in utter incredulity, and wondering whether she had heard aright. "You!"

He bowed an assent, smiling maliciously at her astonishment.

"But on what grounds could you possibly claim them?" she asked, after a moment's pause.

"As heir-at-law."

"Heir-at-law—to whom? Not to my father, surely, in the face of Roy's existence."

"Roy does not exist in the eyes of the law," he returned, coolly, and never removing his eyes from her face.

"If he did, of course I should not have the shadow of a title; but as things really stand the law is on my side."

"What do you mean?" breathed the girl, her face growing very white, and her eyes dilating—half with surprise, half in terror at the calm assurance of his manner.

"I mean this—forgive my brusqueness, but you force me to it—your father and mother were never married.

"Consequently, as the former died without a will, I am entitled to his property as next-of-kin."

Vivien had fallen back in her chair, covering her face with her hands.

"But now she started up, her cheeks crimson, her eyes flashing fire.

"It is a lie!" she cried, stamping her foot passionately on the carpet, "a wicked, mean cowardly lie that you have coined to revenge yourself for my refusal!"

He rose and faced her.

"It is the truth, and I defy you to prove to the contrary," he said, quietly—

"But pray calm yourself—you have not heard all.

"As I said, it was my intention to claim the estates.

"But I met you, and I think I must have fallen in love with you at once.

"At any rate, I could not bring myself to take immediate proceedings, with a knowledge that their result would leave you homeless, so I came on here and waited.

"As I told you, if you had accepted me I should have kept this matter a profound secret.

"But now I reveal it to let you see that so far from having any mercenary motive in wooing you, I offer you the alternative of retaining the wealth and position which by right should be mine."

For a few minutes Vivien stood perfectly still, hardly able to fully realize all this terrible intelligence involved.

She and Roy penniless—worse than that nameless! The mere thought of it was agony.

"What is your authority for this statement?" she demanded, at last.

"A letter from your father, in which he distinctly acknowledges it.

"The fact that your brother and his solicitor have made diligent search for his parents' marriage certificate, and have been unable to find it.

"Besides the late Squire has frequently alluded to the matter in conversation, both to me and to the lawyer, Mr. Winterton.

"I am aware he intended making a will, and leaving all the unentailed property to Roy and to you.

"He was a procrastinating man, and put off doing it until it was too late. Here is the letter I spoke of."

He held it before her in such a position as to enable her to read its contents, and pointed out one sentence, which ran thus—

"I want to have an interview with Winterton concerning the Melton estate, which I should like to separate from the others if possible and settle on that poor boy, as some compensation for the wrong done to him and his mother—he has cause enough to hate my name."

Yes, there it was in her father's own handwriting—a peculiar one, which it would have been impossible to imitate—and such evidence as this brought conviction with it.

The young girl sank down on a couch and broke into low repressed sobs.

The shame nearly overwhelmed her in this first moment of revelation, and Trevor had not miscalculated when he told himself that the idea of averting it would plead eloquently in his favor.

"Listen to me, Vivien. You know, of course, all this would involve if publicity were given to it.

"You and Roy would be penniless—Roy who has been brought up in luxury, and who, if left to himself, could do nothing towards earning a living.

"On the other hand, if you consent to marry me, I will swear most solemnly to forego my claim forever.

"Roy shall keep his place as heir, and you shall be my honored wife. What do you say?"

She looked up at him, her lip curling with fine scorn.

"So you are willing to bargain for me, and accept the sacrifice of a sister's affection in lieu of a wife's love?

"If anyone had told me yesterday you were so ignoble, I would not have believed them."

His face flushed under the scathing satire of her words, and he bit his lip angrily, but he only said—

"You don't know the world yet, Vivien.

"If you did, experience would have taught you there are few things a man will hesitate at in order to obtain the woman he loves."

"Say rather the woman he would buy as a slave is bought—do not degrade love by calling it into the question."

"We will call it what you like—the fact is not altered by the words in which it is clothed," he rejoined, calmly.

"The point is—do you accept the terms I offer?"

"And if I say 'no'?"

"Then I shall at once institute proceedings to claim my rightful heritage."

It was a fearful struggle for the dear girl.

She was herself inherently proud, and had often exulted in the purity of her name, which was an old and unsullied one, and besides this her love for Roy was very great—so great that any sacrifice on his behalf would be justified.

Could she bear to see his inheritance torn from him, even his name taken away, and he himself turned penniless on the mercies of a cruel world, when by one word she could prevent it?

No, surely not, and yet——

Thoughts of what love really was, pure and high and ennobling, had come to her, mingling with her girlish dreams, until she had formed an ideal hero, who should sometime woo her, and in whose life her own should become merged—such a lover as Romeo was to Juliet.

She must give up all this now—forego the sweet illusions—the dim romances she had woven round the name of love.

"Well?" said Trevor at length, in a tone of interrogation, "have you decided yet?"

"No, and I cannot do so to-night, for my brain is in a whirl—give me until to-morrow."

"I will give you a week, and on Christmas Eve you shall tell me your answer," said Trevor, who felt sure her natural unselfishness would prevail at last.

"Meanwhile, I will keep my own counsel, and no one need guess that this conversation has taken place between us."

CHAPTER VI.

CHRISTMAS EVE had come—Christmas Eve, ushered in by sunshine that sparkled on the icicles hanging to the trees, and made the bushes all a-glitter with innumerable diamond points that the Ice King had crowned himself with during the preceding night.

A little of the snow lingered in the deep ridges by the farm gates, but the roads were hard and crisp to the tread, and a delicate rime lay on the evergreens that the Court servants had brought in to decorate the house with—for both Roy and his sister wished to keep up the old custom of adorning their walls with the shining leaves and scarlet berries of the shrub that time has consecrated as a fit emblem of the festive season.

Vivien and Fraulein both helped to weave the wreaths of greenery—the former in a listless, half-hearted sort of way, very different to her usual manner.

The truth was, the young girl felt extremely miserable.

Although she endeavored to disguise the fact, and parried Roy's questions with a forced laugh, her efforts were not altogether successful, for it was impossible to avoid noticing the change that had come over her and stolen from her all the bright vivacity, the gay insouciance that had formerly lent her such a charm.

Ever since her conversation with Trevor she had been pondering deeply over what he said, and whichever way she looked the prospect offered nothing but misery.

Most days she took a long walk to the wood in order to secure to herself solitude and time for thought, and once she had met Gordon with his gun and a brace of dogs at his heels, and he had walked by her side for half-an-hour, talking of various things, but making no allusion to the strange circumstance that had occurred on the afternoon of her visit to Gordon Chase.

And now the day had arrived when she must finally decide on her course of action, and let Trevor know the result of her week's deliberation.

In the afternoon she put on her things and went out, taking her customary path, and thinking to herself, bitterly enough, that her hours of liberty were drawing swiftly to a close.

She had fully made up her mind that she would accept Trevor's terms and save Roy and the honor of his name by the sacrifice of herself.

It was a magnificent afternoon for the time of year, the dead leaves under foot, no longer sodden by rain, but crisp with frost, the air keen and exhilarating, the sky blue as sapphires, and Nature in her kindliest mood for ushering in the great festival of the child-God's birth.

Vivien thought how intensely she would have enjoyed such a walk a week ago, before Trevor's words had crushed all the joy of her glad youth.

And then she thought of what her future would be, linked for life to a man whom she not only did not love, but for whom even her former friendly liking had changed to contempt since he revealed himself in his true colors.

By this time she had arrived at the tower and after a moment's hesitation, actuated it may be by a desire to look once more on the spot where she had first met Gordon, she mounted the steps, and after ascending to the top came half way down again, and then stopped suddenly on hearing the sound of voices from below.

Wondering who the speaker could be, she peered cautiously over the crumbling stones down into the basement of the tower (which she could easily contrive to do, and yet keep herself unnoticed), and there she saw two men sitting on some logs of wood, and in such a position that she could not possibly make her exit without attracting their attention.

This was awkward, for they neither bore a particularly prepossessing appearance, and Vivien was perfectly aware of the loneliness of the spot, and the small chances there were of anyone passing.

So thinking perhaps the men had only come inside for the purpose of eating the great hunches of bread and cheese they held in their hands, and that after having finished they would move on, she decided to wait quietly where she was until they had gone.

Her reconnoitre had given her some idea of what they were like—two tramps, rather over middle age.

One with a very brown face, and a ferocious bull-dog sort of expression, that promised little mercy to an enemy.

The other somewhat younger, and not quite so repellant looking.

Both were attired in coarse corduroy trousers, splashed with the mud of many a long tramp through the dirty roads.

Eating was with them apparently a serious business, for they munched on without exchanging a word until the elder and browner of the two had finished, then he wiped a thick murderous-looking clasp knife with which he had been hacking off huge morsels, on his knee, and restored it to his pocket.

"I wish we had summat to drink," observed the other with a sigh, "it's mighty hard on a man as has been on the road all day, when he can't get a drop o' beer with his wittles."

"It's harder when he can't get wittles or beer," returned his companion, grimly, "and that's bin the case with me pretty often of late."

"Aye, you've had rather a rough time of it since you came out of 'quod;' as for me, I've wished myself back there sometimes, for if they gives ye work to do, they gives ye enough to eat as well."

"I've never wished myself back. All the while I was there I was looking forward to this hour—this hour when I have my liberty, and shall have my revenge!"

The younger man looked at him curiously—he had spoken with a low repressed fierceness that, taken in conjunction with the words themselves, told its own tale of the hatred born of a sense of injury, and fostered by a spirit of vengeance.

"Then ye hav'n't given up yer plan, Mike?" he questioned, dropping his voice to a whisper.

"Given it up! no—and never shall, until I've done what I intended doing.

"Given it up!—when I've bin counting on it, and brooding over it, for the last ten years—when its bin the one thing I have thought of all day, and dreamed of all night!

"It ain't very likely I shall give it up now that I'm within reach of the man, and when this very night I shall see him drop down dead afore me, as my Rachael dropped dead afore him.

"You see this here"—he pulled from under his ragged coat a pistol, and then put it back again very carefully—"well, I stole the money to buy it, and I'd sooner starve than part with it afore it's done its work—the charge that's in it will be in Keith Gordon's heart before this time to-morrow! What's that?" he added, quickly, as a slight sound became faintly audible.

"Oh! nothing—a stoat, maybe," answered his companion, carelessly.

"I say, mate," he continued, in a different tone, "it's rather a ticklish job, this, you know.

"A man has but one neck, and when the rope's round that, everything is all up with him."

"I know, but if I had ten thousand deaths to risk for the sake of killing Gordon, I'd do it!"—with fierce emphasis.

"You must have a big score against him to hate the man like that?"

"I have. I'll tell you what it is! The tale isn't a long one, but it's one that's bin told pretty often, I expect—a gentleman falling in love with a girl as he can't marry and won't leave.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

An Agreeable Surprise.

BY M. W. PAXTON.

"IT'S always pleasanter to give people a surprise, when you can," said Mr. Thorneycroft.

And so he stepped more mincingly over the frozen ground, although he was a good mile and a half from the country house whither his footsteps were bound, as if the old cedar-trees and leafless tangles of blackberry briars along the roadside were so many ears to hear, and telegraphic wires to report.

A snug little man, slightly bald on the crown of his head, with leg of mutton shaped side whiskers, merry gray eyes and a fresh complexion like the sunny side of a winter apple—thus was Mr. Thorneycroft's pen photograph, as he plodded his way over the desolate road which led from the stage station at Winterdale to the Clinton homestead—at least in so far as the stage driver's rather misty directions were to be credited.

"I should a s'posed they'd ha' sent the carriage to meet you, sir," said the man. "It's a good three miles, and not the easiest road in the world neither."

"But you see, my good friend, they don't expect me," said Mr. Thorneycroft. "I intend to surprise them."

"Humph!" said the man. "I don't believe in surprises; but it ain't me as has got to walk the three miles over the hills, with the wind fit to freeze the nose of my face."

So saying, this misanthropic John whipped on his horses, and Mr. Thorneycroft, nowise disheartened, commenced his twilight tramp.

"Clinton don't look for me till next week," he said to himself.

"How he will stare to see me walk in upon him!

"I wonder what he will be doing? It seems almost impossible that ten years have elapsed since last we looked upon each other's faces.

"And to think that he's a sober old edition of Benedict the married man now, with children of his own?

"He wrote to me that his pretty sister-in-law was staying there too.

"Aha! I know what the sly old dog is up to, although he covered up his meaning so neatly under a double stratum of words. He wants me to fall in love with Nora Kincaid.

"Well, why not, if she's half as pretty and agreeable as his letters have made her out to be?

"Up to this time I've been entirely too too busy to think about any such luxurye as love or matrimony; but now that real business seems beyond danger, and things are after a fashion settled, why——"

And Mr. Thorneycroft felt his whiskers with complacent meditation.

But even as he congratulated himself upon the agreeable surprise he was about to give his old college friend, Ferdinand Clinton, he could not but feel the icy touch of the chill north-west wind, as it whistled over the plains and rushed madly round the lee of thickets, like a clumsy young spirit of the Arctic regions playing at hide-and-seek with half a dozen other Boreas blasts.

Mr. Thorneycroft's feet were getting cold; his hands felt like ice even in his fleecy-lined gloves; and he couldn't but reflect that a purple nose and cheek-bones, looking as if they had been coated with red varnish, would hardly add materially to the graces of his first appearance before Miss Nora Kincaid, Clinton's beautiful sister-in-law.

"Perhaps it would have been wiser for me to have hired a buggy or something," he thought, a little uneasily. "But then I couldn't have surprised 'em half so neatly. Whew-w-w! I wonder if people's ears ever do freeze in this climate!"

However, there is an end to all things, even to a desolate twilight tramp over a February wilderness, and presently our hero came in sight of the welcome lights of the handsome white house on the hill side, just as dusk was drawing its sombre veil over all the landscape.

"I don't really think I could have walked much farther," he said to himself. "And it is beginning to snow quite fast. So this is where old Ferdinand lives, eh? Pretty grounds—arbor-vitæ hedge—nice idea of a lawn; upon my word, the place is more extensive than I had supposed.

"Lights shining out through red curtains—quite picturesque!

"A lucky thought—I'll take a peep at 'em all, before I introduce myself.

"How Ferdinand will stare! Ha! ha! ha!"

And on tiptoe Mr. Thorneycroft crept across the piazza, and flattened his nose against the glass of the window.

A quiet domestic scene met his view: a shaded lamp burning like some tranquil moon on the centre-table, a great fire of logs burning on the open hearth-stone, two or three little children playing at building block towers on the rug, and two pretty women reading by the light—slender, dark-haired and graceful.

"I wonder which of 'em is Nora?" thought Mr. Thorneycroft. "Confound it, they've both got their faces turned away. Perhaps at the farther window I could see, if——"

Tiptoeing across the snow-besprinkled planks, our hero's boot soles played him, literally speaking, a slippery trick, and down he came in a sitting posture, his head striking smartly against the panes of glass.

"Oh!" cried Mr. Thorneycroft, with an acute accent of mingled pain and dismay.

And in barely a second, as it seemed to him, the solitary piazza was swarming with life.

He was seized around the collar by a Herculean grasp, two savage dogs hung barking at his coat tails, and the air was resonant with shrieks feminine and growls masculine.

"Don't let him come in here," cried a falsetto voice, doubtless proceeding forth from one of the fair students. "I shall die, if you do! Oh, if Ferdinand were only at home!"

"I've got you, you villain!" roared a gruff voice, as Mr. Thorneycroft felt himself shaken to and fro, like a reed in a hurricane, while a painful apoplectic sensation took possession of throat and brain.

"You are the fellow that has been sneak-thieving round the country this past month, are you?

"Well, you've got to the end of your rope at last.

"Where is Deacon Barley's overcoat? Where are Mrs. Grimes silver spoons? Where have you hidden Colonel Johnson's sleigh-robes and bells, eh?"—with a separate shake for each interrogatory.

"It's all a mistake," he croaked, trying to free himself from the strangling pressure on his cravat; "it's——"

"I dare say; a likely story," responded his captor, a muscular young fellow somewhat taller than himself. "There, there, Nora, don't scream so; I've got him safe enough."

"Oh, my!" ejaculated a voice from the crowd of woman-servants at the door; "what a ill-lookin' old villain he is, to be sure! I'd a-knowed him for a sneak-thief anywheres."

"I am no sneak-thief!" ejaculated Mr. Thorneycroft. "I am——"

"Never mind your genealogical table, my friend," was the response, "but just come with me.

"Good dog, Bose! hold tight, Carlo!"

And the dogs took a better grip.

"Where are you going to put the poor fellow, Harry?" chirped a soft voice, the screaming, by the way, having by this time subsided into a volley of sighs and long breaths and "O goodness graciouses!"

"In the chamber over the brick stable. He'll keep there, I imagine, with a good stout padlock and plenty of chain!"

"But it's so cold there!" with a pitying accent.

"I'll risk it."

"Will you hear me?" paused poor Thorneycroft. "I am——"

"Come along, and no more of your nonsense!" was the brusque rejoinder.

"But I came to——"

"We know quite well what you came after, my worthy friend!" answered the muscular hero.

"Any necessary explanation can be made before a magistrate to-morrow.

"Carlo, old boy, d'ye mind?" Carlo wagged his bushy tail meaningly.

"If he opens his mouth, on him, my dog! Now, friend, you will find that silence is by all odds the best policy."

And thus Mr. Thorneycroft was dragged ignominiously across the the lawn, through a sort of paved court, to a sepulchrally smelling stable, where it was cold as Greenland and damp as the Bastile, and locked in.

"Is this the way to treat a Christian?" he indignantly demanded, the minute six good inches of door plank were between him and Carlo's double row of gleaming fangs. "Listen, you fellow! I am——"

But the sound of vanishing footsteps was all the answer he received, and a hoarse growl told that the dogs had mounted guard across the threshold of his prison-house.

"The scoundrels!" he muttered to himself—"the ill-bred louts, not to know a gentleman when they see him!"

But then he remembered that his enemies had really not seen him thus far, and could but confess to himself that the circumstances did wear rather a suspicious aspect.

"It will be all right to-morrow, when they give me a chance to explain matters," thought Mr. Thorneycroft, striving to be hopeful.

But in the mean time—alas! was this to be the end of his "surprise?"

The winter night wore away, and Mr. Thorneycroft, huddled up in his straw, like a convict in a prison cell, shivered through the long lonely hours.

Rheumatic pains began to dart through his limbs; frequent sneezes shook him from head to foot, avant couriers of a hearty attack of influenza; and he felt his neck growing stiff and stiffer.

"Why couldn't I have rung the door bell, like a Christian?" he asked himself regretfully. "Or, better still, why didn't I telegraph that I was coming? I never will undertake to surprise people again!"

Toward morning he drifted into a sort of unquiet slumber, from which he was aroused by the turning of a key in the rusty padlock without.

"Hey! who's there?" he cried aloud, starting up as well as he could for the stiffness in all his limbs. "Ferdinand, old fellow!"

For the light through the eastern window was clear and radiant now.

"Why, it's Thorneycroft!" bawled a cheerful voice.

"How the deuce came Tom Thorneycroft locked up here like a burglar!"

"But why didn't you tell 'em who you were?"

"How could I?" snapped Mr. Thorneycroft, "when they didn't give me a chance, with their dogs and their revolvers, to get in a single sentence?"

"Well, it is rather an inhospitable reception," said Clinton, warmly pressing his friend's hand; "and had I been at home, it never would have happened.

"But come in and get warmed; you are as cold as a snow image. Breakfast is just ready, and——"

"Upon my word, sir," put in a genial voice, "I am heartily sorry that such a misunderstanding should have occurred. I'm afraid I screwed your neckcloth up pretty tight once or twice, last evening; but things did look rather ugly for you, you must own yourself. Pray accept every apology."

"This is my friend, Mr. Allston," said Ferdinand Clinton; and as Thorneycroft bowed stiffly he added in a whisper: "Just engaged to Nora, my wife's sister. Ha, ha! old fellow, you see you're a day behind the fair."

And during the long siege of inflammatory rheumatism that followed, our hero was doomed to be a daily witness of the billings and coolings of the engaged pair.

Poor Mr. Thorneycroft!

Truly, in his case, the sport had hardly been worth the candle.

Clinton thought it all a jolly lark, but then Clinton hadn't been locked up all night in the stable chamber, with six weeks of inflammatory rheumatism by way of sequel.

And things do look so differently from different points of view.

AN OSTRICH'S NEST.—After pairing, the ostrich begins to make his nest. It is the male alone that performs this duty. To do it, he squats upon the ground, and, balancing himself upon his breast-bone, scratches up the earth with his legs and throws it behind him. When he has dug out enough on one side to suit him, he turns round and begins to dig on another side, and continues this operation until he has made a hole large enough for him to sit in comfortably. A few days after the nest is finished, the female begins to lay one egg on every alternate day for eighteen or twenty days. She then rests for a while, which time varies from four to ten days, and then begins to lay more. A pair of ostriches yield forty eggs. This is only the minimum number, which is always reached. It is not unusual for a well-fed, well-kept pair to yield fifty and even sixty eggs. The eggs are placed so as to leave no space between them. The male and the female brood alternately. At night the male is always on the nest, as it possesses greater warmth than the female. When the birds relieve each other on the nest, the new-comer turns over each egg in order that the portion which has lain against the nest shall receive the warmth of the brooder. These birds performs their duties with the greatest skill, without any noise or breakage of the eggs. They squat down, and with their head and neck rake up and turn over every one of the eggs, one after another, without neglecting a single one. The incubation lasts forty-five days on an average, sometimes fifty days, but never continues beyond that. When the chicklings hatch out, they can be heard trying to break the shell of the egg. Sometimes they succeed in doing so, but usually the father breaks the egg under his breast-bone, tears the inside skin with his bill, and frees the chickling. Upon first reaching the air, the chickling remains limp and weak. But the warmth of the parent soon revives it, and a few hours afterward it begins to run about the nest, exercising its long legs, toppling over at each step, and recommencing again its stumbling journey. Four days after their hatching, the chicklings begin to eat. They run after insects and swallow small pebbles. The father and mother do not help their little ones to find food.

Scientific and Useful.

HOARSENESS.—The *Journal de Pharmacie*, says that a piece of borax weighing two or three grains will, if allowed to dissolve slowly in the mouth of a singer, remove all traces of hoarseness.

COPYING.—Fine writing on glazed paper will give one or two fair copies without calling in the assistance of a press or water if use is made of a writing solution of three parts of good jet-black ink and one part of gelatine.

MUCILAGE.—A useful mucilage for labels etc., can be made of two ounces of dextrine dissolved in one ounce of acetic acid and five ounces of water, and the addition of about an ounce of alcohol when the dextrine is well dissolved.

LUMINOUS PAPER.—A luminous waterproof paper, which may be of use in places not well adapted for the application of the so-called luminous paint, may be made from a mixture of forty parts pulp, ten parts phosphorescent powder, one part of gelatine, one part of potassium bichromate and ten parts of water.

PAPER SPOKES.—Paper spokes for wheels are among the latest appliances for that ever-increasing article. The paper pulp is forced into iron molds under heavy pressure, where it dries and hardens, and the spokes thus produced are said to be much superior to wood. Paper is far supplanting wood in many useful ways.

CURE FOR DRUNKENNESS.—The *Scientific American* notes the case of a confirmed inebriate who was cured of his thirst for liquor by drinking a teaspoonful of the decoction of a half-ounce of ground quassia steeped in a pint of vinegar whenever his craving was violent. It satisfied the craving, supplied needed stimulus and strength, and in time took away all the desire for strong drink.

Farm and Garden.

BUTTER.—It is said that an infallible test for distinguishing butter from butterine is to melt the substance and then suddenly chill it with ice. The lard will go to the bottom and the butter to the top, the line of separation being distinctly visible.

HORSE COLLARS.—Keep the horse collars clean. The dust and dirt which adhere to collars when they are wet with sweat works into lumps and ridges, and sore shoulders are the result. If the collars become hard wash them clean, pound them and apply oil.

HOUSE REFUSE.—The house slops should be all saved. Those not fit for the pig can be used on the growing crops of the garden especially celery. It is surprising what an invigorating effect results from throwing the soapsuds upon plants in the growing season. An ordinary flower garden may be kept in a thrifty condition if every plant receives an application.

INSECTS.—The time is at hand when you should carefully examine your henhouse and fortify it against the army of insects so injurious to your fowls. A careful use of kerosene oil will keep off lice. Coal tar is also frequently used to good advantage for the same purpose. Apply it with a brush into every crack and crevice where there is any chance for vermin and it will keep them off.

CLOVER.—Red clover will produce the heaviest crop of hay on suitable land that can be grown. About four pounds of green grass make one of hay. Orchard grass produces a pound of hay to less than three of grass. Alsike clover yields less than the red variety, but the proportion of grass to hay is the same. While it is advisable to secure as large yield as possible it is best to grow a mixture in order to secure quality.

DRAINAGE.—1. Become informed upon the theory and best methods known and used in drainage. 2. Do not literally copy the methods of others, but carefully adapt them to your own case. 3. Provide good outlets and large mains. 4. Have faith in good tile and thorough work. 5. Study economy and efficiency in locating drains. 6. In difficult cases or where you have doubt about the success of your plans, submit the case to a good engineer before expending money or labor.

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WHAT IT MEANS.

"Pluck" is a slang term, but every one knows what it means. The idea it is employed to communicate or express is that of courage, with this difference, that, whereas a man be, as it were, passively or stolidly courageous, he must be active if he be plucky.

Of course there cannot be any etymological right or wrong in the matter of significance with regard to such a word as "pluck;" but this is what we understand, and what we believe to be generally understood, by it.

Pluck is not a blind impulse of audacity. It realizes the strength of the enemy it proposes to vanquish.

It proceeds on a reasonable and, as far as may be, accurate estimate of the costs of the enterprise in which it is about to engage.

Many a man is brave in an emergency "on the spur of the moment," but cannot coolly face danger. Pluck looks ahead, and lays its plans carefully, sagaciously, and with every precaution.

No man who is true to his nature will allow himself to be daunted by the difficulty of living. Of course life is a toil; unquestionably it will be hard work to live. We have—most of us, at least—seen enough of the world and experienced the effort of a laborious existence so as to be well assured that we shall not find our path through the world carpeted with moss and strewn with roses; but this does not dismay us. The soldier is not scared by the prospect of meeting his enemy: on the contrary, he is eager for the fray, because then he will have the opportunity of showing his prowess in high deeds of valor.

Without pluck no man can be either happy or useful. We ought, one and all of us, to be fearless in our hearts and boldly adventurous in the path of duty. A guilty consciousness is the secret of terror—"conscience make cowards of us all." If we spend our strength in seeking the gratification of our own present passions and impulses, we make our object; and the care of self is sure to be a heavy and grievous burden.

He that is ever trying to save his life, in a moral sense, loses it; he who serves self has a tyrant for his master. By thinking of self insensibly we tax ourselves with a care that was never intended to occupy and worry us.

Only the unselfish know what it is to be really free and happy. If a man charges himself with the safe-conduct of some pampered favorite over a difficult country, he will soon find that his hands are too full of trouble to be of any proper use to him. So it is with the man who spends his energy in trying to "take care of himself," "to do well for himself," and "to enjoy himself," as the silly phrases run.

He must needs be fearful and hesitating who has taken such a burden on his shoulders.

The man of true pluck thinks nothing of self. His heart is steadfastly set to do his duty; and, in the honest and earnest pursuit of this lawful enterprise, he wins honor, keeps a good conscience, and none shall or can make him afraid.

Life would not only be not worth living, but a terrible infliction if all we are told of the present and the future were strictly true.

It would be difficult to conceive of any greater responsibility than that which would rest on all parents if it were the fact that every child is born into the world as a doomed creature.

The very idea is revolting to the commonest instincts of humanity, and therefore of course abhorrent to the idea of a merciful and all-loving God.

SANCTUM CHAT.

A CLERGYMAN in Scotland, a short time ago, offered to give a shilling to every man and half a crown to every woman who would come to him the next day and declare truthfully that they had not spoken of worldly matters after church. Not one came.

—

SIR JAMES PAGET and other English medical authorities are pointing out the great importance of not over-feeding infants with starchy food, such as bread, farina, gruel, etc., as the warm season approaches. They claim that such over-feeding is a fruitful cause of the large infant mortality in warm weather. The one article, it is urged, most necessary to the life of the child at all times is water.

—

WHAT is my opinion of prudence? It is the head on a nail which prevents its being driven too far in. What is my opinion of affection? It is a cheap chromo "touched up" to look like an oil painting. What is my opinion of braggadocio? It is a linen collar with the starch washed out of it. What is my opinion of intemperance? It is a fire we kindle in ourselves without a dollar's worth of insurance on the premises.

—

THERE is use in beauty. It makes home attractive, its exterior more respectable, our lives happier, our dispositions sweeter, and our social and domestic intercourse more refined. By all means plant some little thing of grace to temper the rugged surroundings of the front yard. Its silent though eloquent language will speak to the visitor or the passer-by a word of eulogy for you. The least flower or shrub will be some attraction, a curved path winding between trees to the house, a mound of stone and shells, with the ivy trailing over them, the flowering shrub or turf of fern, all such things are attractive, and form a pleasing object for the eye of the most indifferent beholder.

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THE deposits of registered bonds of the United States with the Treasurer of the United States amply secure the currency issued by the national banks. Frequent inspections are made by the Comptroller of the Currency, and whenever the market value of the bonds is less than of the circulation, he is authorized to demand additional security in money or United States bonds, to the amount of the depreciation. The national bank notes are all printed by the Government, and are furnished to the banks in such quantities as they are authorized to circulate. In consequence there are no over issues.

—

THE English-speaking people in a very few years will number 100,000,000. Our children may live to see the numbers spread to hundreds of millions. The present rate of increase in the United States—by far the largest factor in the question—is said to be two and one-half per cent. per annum. The question whether at the end of the next century the English-speaking people will number more or less than 1,000,000,000 is dependent, of course, upon other causes than the mere ratios of increase, but as a question of possible figures it depends simply upon whether the rate of increase in the future slightly exceeds or falls short of what it has been in our own times.

—

IT is learned at the office of the Second Auditor of the Treasury that soldiers are being extensively swindled by false representations on the part of attorneys as to the money alleged to be due them under new laws on account of bounty, etc. Nearly 500 letters are received daily from soldiers inquiring into the status of claims which they have been induced to file under the pretense that they were entitled to additional bounty under the alleged new laws. They are persuaded in this way to pay an advance fee of from $2 to $5 to attorneys to prosecute their claims. The claims are rejected, of course, and the claimants never hear of it until they apply to the department.

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APROPOS of the crusade begun against piano-playing in Berlin, a New York paper says: "The average German young lady practices four hours a day, and many German young men immitate her miserable example. Police statistics show that the number of pianos in Berlin averages two and an eighth for every house. Thus one very block of a Berlin street there are from 200 to 740 pianos, according to the character of the street and the financial circumstances of its residents. In a block where there are, say 400 pianos, each of which is in operation four hours a day, it is evident that there cannot be a moment between dawn and midnight when some one is not practicing scales and exercises, or, worse still, playing Wagner's music."

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HISTORY has preserved the memory of the ice-palace built by the Russian Empress Anne, who punished several of her dainty courtiers by compelling them to pass the night in its great chamber of state, where they were almost frozen to death. The Czar Paul constructed a room formed entirely of huge mirrors, where he spent hours walking to and fro in full uniform—a singular taste for one who was the ugliest man in Russia. One of the native princes of Java cooled his palace by making a stream fall in a cascade over the gateway; and the Indian despot, Tippoo Sahib, placed beside his dinner-table a life-sized figure of a tiger devouring an English officer, the roar of the beast and the shrieks of the victim being imitated by hidden machinery. The late King of Oude kept in his country palace a large collection of pet serpents, which he is said to have more than once amused himself by letting loose, with fatal effect upon the luckless Hindus who came within reach.

—

PERSONS who eagerly grasp new truths are very apt to drop old ones entirely out of sight. This accounts for the great extremes to which men oscillate in their opinions. None are so bitter against a party, sect, or system as those who have forsaken it and embraced another. Yet it is out of the old, and by the sincerity with which they cling to it, that they have been able to grasp something larger and higher; and, while they may rightly rejoice in their fuller light they owe a respectful memory to the lesser light which has thus guided them onward. As well might the mountaineer turn round and revile the steps which he has trodden and despise the narrower prospects which he has left, simply because he has ascended a little higher and can see a little farther, as the searcher after truth throw contempt upon what was once the highest he could attain.

—

I HAVE sometimes thought says Cardinal Wanning when looking on a church full of children, there is nothing more beautiful in the sight of God. A beautiful garden of roses, lilies, and lovely flowers, is sweet and beautiful to the eye. The hand of man guards and watches over it so that no harm can enter. Sometimes a storm of wind or hail breaks the lilies, destroys the roses, and makes ruin where before all was sweet and orderly. The wicked and malicious man comes in to wreck and ruin his neighbor's garden, and when he sees this, everybody is touched to the heart. Everything lovely and sweet, trampled down and wrecked, makes one grieved; but in the sight of God, not the most beautiful garden fashioned by the hand of man, not even Paradise, the garden of Eden in all its glory and beauty of flowers and fruit, was so bright and glorious as are the souls of children in whom the Holy Ghost dwells. Such a scene is sweeter and brighter in the sight of God than any garden man ever formed.

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A PROLONGED absence of sunlight is a very serious matter. Its effects upon the health are direct and perceptible. We get no ozone, and we become dull and listless, as if we had been sitting up all night. When thus out of tone and below par we are consequently deficient in that vital energy which would otherwise enable us to shake off any ordinary ailment. Nor is this all. Absence of sunlight for any considerable period is almost invariably followed by epidemic outbreaks. When the sun is active filth of all kinds putrifies as it collects. When there is no sunshine the filth collects accumulates in masses and ferments. These fermented accumulations are a source of positive danger as soon as the sun resumes its activity. Decomposition under a bright sun is comparatively harmless. Slow decomposition in the dark is especially hostile to health. We need no chemist to tell us all this, but at the same time it is well to bear the chemistry of common life in mind. Children suffer more from the absence of the sun's rays than do adults. Adults have only to keep alive; children have to keep alive and to grow, which entails a double amount of chemical work. Now, if there be no sunshine, we can best supplement its absence by exercise. And yet, strange enough, the substance of sunshine is regarded by most mothers as a sufficient ground for keeping children within doors. It is, on the contrary the very reason why they should be sent out and kept out as much as possible.

SOMETHING CHEAP.

BY CHARLES SWAIN.

There's not a cheaper thing on earth,
Nor one yet half so dear:
'Tis worth more than distinguish'd birth,
Or thousands gain'd a year!
It lends the day a new delight:
'Tis virtue's firmest shield.
And adds more beauty to the night
Than all the stars may yield.

It maketh poverty content,
To sorrow whispers peace:
It is a gift from heaven, that's sent
For mortals to increase.
It meets you with a smile at morn,
It lulls you to repose:
A flower for peer and peasant born,
An everlasting rose.

A charm to banish grief away,
To snatch the frown from care:
Turn tears to smiles, make dulness gay,
Spread gladness everywhere;
And yet 'tis cheap as summer's dew,
That gems the lily's breast—
A talisman for love as true
As ever man possess'd.

As smiles the rainbow through the cloud,
When threat'ning storm begins:
As music 'mid the tempest loud,
That still its sweet way wins:
As springs an arch across the tide,
Where wave conflicting foam:
So comes this seraph to our side,
This angel of our home.

What may this wondrous spirit be,
With power unheard before—
This charm, this bright divinity?
Good Temper—nothing more!
Good temper! nothing more!
That woman homeward brings:
And can the poorest peasant lift
To bliss unknown to kings.

The Blood Stone.

BY M. W. PAXTON.

"HUSH!" said my fellow-traveller, holding up his hand with a warning gesture, and glancing at his wife, who was snugly ensconced amongst her rugs in the corner. "Hush!"

"My dear sir," I remonstrated, "my reference to Doctor Price——"

"Hush!" interrupted my companion in a more authoritative voice. "Not a word!"

Now, this was very mysterious conduct. The gentleman who curtailed my remarks so brusquely had entered the carriage at Rugby with his wife, and we had been whiling away an hour or so of our journey by retailing our views upon current subjects to each other.

Having chatted over one topic or another, some unlucky impulse had led me to refer to Dr. Price and his recent attempt at the revival of Druidism by the cremation of an infant.

To my surprise my allusion had a marked effect upon my companion, who became much agitated, and checked me in the decisive manner which I have quoted.

"Ah! it's all right," he resumed, bending over and looking down at his wife. "She is asleep.

"Come over here into the far corner, so that she cannot hear us if she wakes."

I obeyed this mysterious injunction, with many surmises in my mind as to the cause of so much precaution.

"It's a painful subject to her," he said, nodding his head in the direction of the sleeping woman.

"I have known her have an attack of acute mania on hearing an allusion made to it."

"Made to what?"

"To Druidism."

"What an extraordinary thing!" I ejaculated.

"I have been keeping the papers from her during the last week," continued my acquaintance, "so that she should not hear of this escapade of the doctor.

"I am convinced it would have a very bad effect upon her mind."

"Indeed!" I remarked not without a growing conviction that my companion was a little wrong in the upper story.

"Ah! of course you don't understand," he said, smiling at my evident bewilderment.

"The fact is, that just before our marriage—some ten years ago—my wife had a very terrible experience in connection with Druidism.

"It did not get into the papers at the time, but there are a good many people alive who can testify to the facts.

"It shattered her nervous system, and anything which recalls it knocks her over very much."

With this short preface, my new friend, leaning well forward and speaking in a low voice, with many precautionary glances at his sleeping wife, told me the story of her extraordinary adventure.

I have endeavored to set it down in his own words as far as I can, but I cannot imitate the earnestness of his manner, nor the weird effect produced by the flickering carriage-lamp, and the presence of the unconscious heroine of this strange story.

"I don't know whether you know Wales well," he began; "but even if you do, it is not at all likely that you have ever surveyed as far as Llanduran.

"It is an out-of-the-way little mountain village up in the north, not far from the sea, a place which is hardly marked on the maps, and where no tourist ever goes unless he stumbles upon it by accident.

"This was our fate in the fall of '72, and we were so taken by the pretty surroundings and the primitive peasantry, that we made it our resting-place for some time.

"We were a fairly large party—my brother Stephen and his wife, my present wife, with her two brothers, and three friends of mine from London.

"Altogether we had a very jolly time of it, and astonished the quiet-living Cymric population not a little, until our holiday was brought to an abrupt and tragic termination.

"I must tell you that my wife—or Miss Madison, as she was in those days—was of a most adventurous disposition.

"She appeared to be absolutely insensible to fear.

"I was continually remonstrating with her as to the risks which she ran, and her brothers did all they could to restrain her, but without avail.

"The more we spoke, the more daring would she become.

"We were compelled, at last, to leave her behind when we intended to do any serious mountaineering, for fear she should meet with some accident.

"One morning, when we came down to breakfast, we learned to our surprise that Miss Madison had been seen to leave the inn alone at early dawn, in her walking-dress, and to take the direction of the mountains.

"Her intention, evidently, was to steal a march upon us by visiting alone some of those places which we had gone to without her.

"We were all rather alarmed by this escapade of the wild girl.

"Our alarm deepened into positive terror when the whole day passed without our hearing a word of her.

"The district was a notoriously dangerous one.

"The mountains, without being remarkably high, were jagged and steep, and intersected by numerous chasms.

"Several fatal accidents had occurred of late in the vicinity.

"No wonder, then, that I felt a sinking at my heart when I left the inn that night at the head of a party with torches in search of the woman whom I had already begun to love.

"I will tell you the story now from her point of view, and give you the facts which we heard afterwards from her own lips.

"Leaving the inn, then, and laughing to herself at the way in which she was giving us the slip, she made the best of her way into the mountains.

"The morning was a beautiful one, and the crisp, bracing air increased her natural activity and endurance, so that she had walked a very long way before the thought of fatigue entered her mind.

"She had gone on at random, following the little goat-paths from one rugged valley to another, until she had lost sight of all the familiar landmarks, and found herself in a desolate labyrinth, surrounded on every side by precipitous crags, and without the smallest sign of human life.

"Many women would have been terrified in her position, but, as I have said, she was constitutionally brave; so, finding it hopeless to retrace her steps, she pushed on, in the hope of reaching some eminence from which she could catch a glimpse of the outside world.

"As she advanced, the scenery became more dismal.

"The mountains in those regions are always desolate, being hardly picturesque enough to attract tourists, and too barren to allow anyone to settle among them.

"She stumbled along among great boulders, and along the bed of a dried-up stream, with lofty granite walls on each side of her without break or opening.

"Following the track of the old torrent, she traced it at last to a place where there had evidently been a cascade, as the bed of the stream descended precipitously for thirty or forty feet.

"Hoping by ascending to obtain some idea of her whereabouts, my wife clambered up this steep incline, and succeeded with some difficulty in reaching the top.

"The sight before her was an extraordinary one.

The gap through which the stream had forced its way was the only entrance to a little ravine, surrounded on all sides by high, dark cliffs.

"This secluded nook formed a *cul-de-sac* about two hundred yards long and fifty broad, ringed in by fortress which sprouted from the base of the rocky walls.

"In the centre of the clear space in the middle was a large flat slab, round which were placed a number of stones, standing upon their ends, and forming a double circle.

"This arrangement was evidently artificial, and my wife looked round, in the hope of seeing some signs of human life.

"To her great delight she perceived among the trees a rough sort of hut, to which she hurried, with the intention of getting some refreshment if possible, and then of inquiring her way homewards.

"The rude door of this wooden dwelling was ajar, and Miss Madison, after knocking several times without receiving an answer, pushed her way in.

"The room in which she found herself was a small one, and furnished in the roughest manner possible.

"A heap of goat-skins in the corner appeared to have been utilised as a bed, and a large block of wood in the centre was evidently intended as a table, as the remains of a meal, in the shape of a couple of bones, were lying upon it.

"What struck the young lady most, however, in this extraordinary apartment were the walls, which were thickly covered with curious inscriptions painted on it in dark letters.

"These were in some unknown language, which she conjectured to be Welsh; but there were others, especially over the door and in the centre of each wall, which were evidently designed as symbols or charms, consisting of the same letter, repeated a number of times in different shapes and forms.

"My wife was standing in the door-way, regarding all these strange things with natural curiosity, when she became aware of a shadow that intervened between her and the sun.

"Turning round, she saw behind her the most extraordinary mortal that she had ever beheld.

"He was an elderly man, with long, floating hair and a grizzled beard, which descended over his breast.

"He could not have been less than six feet four inches high, and the breadth of his shoulders and the length of his arms denoted extraordinary strength, while the great club upon which he leaned might have either served him as a support or as a weapon.

"His dress was a sort of ragged gown, which had been originally white, but was now weather-stained and dirty.

"What struck my wife, however, more than either his other features or his strange attire, were his eyes, which were of a light, almost colorless blue, but which projected considerably, and shifted from one object to another without remaining still for an instant.

"'Hail, lady!' he exclaimed, advancing towards Miss Madison, and speaking in a well-modulated voice. 'For five moons I have waited for you. Why hast thou tarried so long?'

"Considerably astonished, but more amused than frightened, the young lady took a step or two back from the strange apparition, who walked slowly forwards, waving his hand rhythmically from side to side.

"'The blood-stone is dry!' he cried, 'the blood-stone is dry!

"'Shall it be said that in the days of the fifteenth avatar there was no man who would honor the old gods, and no woman who would dare lie down upon the blood-stone?

"'Britain's noblest and fairest have stretched themselves upon that cold couch. You are worthy of the honor, maiden. Thy cheek is unblanched, and thy hand is steady.

"'So should she be whom the high gods select.'

"My wife had begun by this time to realize that the man in front of her was a maniac, though she had not yet fathomed the meaning of his strange words.

She endeavored to conceal her fright as much as possible, however, and to conciliate her fierce-looking companion.

"'You must lead a lonely life, sir,' she said, 'Who are you, and why do you dwell up here alone?'

"'Who am I?' he cried, tossing his long, thin arms in the air. 'I am Ap-Griffiths, of the pure blood of Ariadenna, seventieth in descent from the high priest Moris, who was second brother to the great Queen Badicea.

"'Woman, I am the last of the Druids. All round,' he continued, mournfully, 'men have left the old creed. None bow to the high gods now.

"'Only we are staunch and true, maiden; you and I—the slayer and the slain.'

"Thoroughly alarmed by this time, my wife endeavored to edge away to the mouth of the little glen, but the maniac, who was wildly excited, caught her by the wrist and dragged her over to the spot where the stones were.

"'Have I not done it well?' he cried. 'There have been many larger, but none more complete.

"'What is there wanting? Here is the blood-stone,' pointing to the flat slab in the centre; 'it has been dry for many years, but when you lie on it, maiden, with the flames roaring around you, and when your life blood hisses upon the hot stone, then the gods will know there are believers yet.

"'Nay, do not shudder and shrink. Your vile body may be charred and tortured, but your spirit will soar above the stars, ever exulting in a happiness which no words can depict.

"'Mark my stones. Thirty-four without, and twenty-three within, according to the direction of the learned and holy Moris.

"'I have a trench, too, around the blood-stone, and my instrument is as it should be.'

"Here he drew a long, keen knife from his bosom.

"'All has been ready for months, save only the victim, and now the great gods have sent me that also.'

My wife was, as I have already told you, a woman of great courage and resource.

"It was evident to her in a moment that to attempt to escape was impossible, in the presence of so agile and powerful an adversary.

"Her only hope of safety lay in humoring and outwitting him.

"She turned towards him, therefore, and assumed as much calmness as she could, while she asked the terrible question—

"'When am I to be sacrificed?'

"'At the middle hour of the night,' said the maniac, with decision.

"She felt instinctively that it was useless to plead her sex, her age, or her helplessness to this sanguinary fanatic.

"The sun was already low down on the horizon, and there would be only a few hours to pass before she should find herself stretched upon the fatal blood-stone.

"Her last chance lay in the use she might make of that short period.

"'I am ignorant,' she said, 'of many of the things of which you speak. I have much to learn before I can die.'

"'You are right, maiden,' he said; 'there is much which none can teach in these latter days save those who still have the priestly blood in their veins.

"'Come with me into my dwelling, and I will discourse with you concerning many things, that when thy soul is loosened from its bonds it may know whither it speedeth.'

"With these words the Druid as I will call him, led Miss Madison into the hut, and commanded her to be seated on a rough wooden bench which stood opposite the door.

"He himself laid down upon a couple of goat-skins at her feet, and began to talk to her with great volubility and earnestness.

"Much of his conversation was unintelligible to her, and occasionally he would break into rude doggerel verses, but she could understand enough to gather that he was laying down the precepts of the old British faith.

"Poor girl! her mind was too full of horror to allow her to pay much attention to his disquisition.

"Certain death seemed to stare her in the face—and death in its most horrible form.

"Look which way she would, there seemed to be no possibility of escape.

"Through the half-open door she could see that the night was drawing in.

"The Druid observed it too, for, suddenly ceasing his harangue, he sprang to his feet, and seized a great chopper which leaned against the wall.

"'I must leave you for a time, maiden,' he said. 'There is much to be done before the darkness comes.

"'The wood is to be cut for the funeral pyre, for I swear to you that none who ever lay upon that hard bridal couch shall have had a more seemly ending than thine shall be.'

"With these words he hurried out of the hut, and Miss Madison could tell by the crashing sound that he was cutting among the fir trees which surrounded the valley.

"For a moment a ray of hope came into her mind.

"Might she not slip past him while he was engaged in his work, and gain the mouth of the ravine without his detecting her?

"She rose with the determination to risk everything upon the chance, when, to her unutterable horror, she found that the cunning miscreant had, in some unaccountable way, managed to slip the noose of a rope round her ankles while he lay at her feet, and that she was firmly pinioned to the bench.

"It was only then that the relentless cruelty and unbending resolution of the monster who had captured her came fully home to her.

"She screamed piteously for aid, though she knew that her cries were as useless as her struggles would be.

"She was entirely at the mercy of the maniac.

"He came back upon hearing her cries, and stood in the door-way, looking down at her with a look of melancholy upon his face.

"It was so dark now that it was difficult for her to distinguish his features.

"'Lady,' he said, 'this is not what I had hoped.

"'How shall thy courage bear thee up at the supreme moment if thou shrinkest now?

"'You have been honored above all women by the selection of the gods. Canst thou not prove thyself worthy of the choice?

"'Learn, too, that thy cries are of no avail, for there is no human ears for many a mile.

"'Thou art not the only one on whom death will come to-night.

"When the red light of thy pyre tinges the crags of Coumorris, and thy holocaust is completed, then Ap-Griffiths, the last of the priestly line, shall pass away with his mission gloriously fulfilled.

"'My life, as well as yours, maiden, terminates at the coming of the fifteenth avatar, which my knowledge teaches me will be at the twelfth hour of this night.'

"Driven to desperation, my poor wife prayed and begged for mercy from the madman, using every possible entreaty and expostulation to prevent him from carrying out his murderous design.

"Her prayers, however, had the opposite effect, for, flying into a paroxysm of rage, the Druid sprang upon her, forcing her down on the bench, to which she was already pinioned.

"'Wicked and ungrateful woman!' he roared, winding a cord round her body, and securing her more firmly than before, 'would you persuade the only faithful one to turn false? Not a word more, or I must silence your tongue. You have already committed a grievous sin.'

"With these words, he seized his chopper once more, and went back to his work, cutting great fagots, and piling them around the fatal blood-stone.

"Gradually the darkness of night settled down upon the little valley.

"The poor girl—stretched, more dead than alive, upon the rough bench—could distinguish the gaunt outlines of the madman as he wielded his chopper with demoniacal fury.

"Then the sound ceased, and she lost sight of him in the gloom.

"When the moon came out, however, she perceived him once more, kneeling among the perpendicular stones.

"He was bowing his head, waving his arms and giving other symptoms of being engaged in religious devotion.

"Then he stood up, and burst into a rude, wild chant, which reverberated through the little ravine, and was echoed back from the rocky walls.

"During this time, the very possibility of

escape had ceased to occur to Miss Madison.

"Suddenly, however, her senses, strained to an unnatural tension, detected a sound in the distance.

"She listened once more in a quiver of excitement, and again it seemed to her that the breeze bore a faint note to her ear, not unlike the sound of a horn.

"Could it be that her friends had hit upon the right track?

"She lay perfectly still, able to hear the beatings of her own heart.

"For five minutes all was silence, save the monotonous chant of the maniac.

"Then again the same long wail struck upon her ear, apparently rather louder and more near than before.

"The Druid seemed to hear it, too, for he ceased his incantation, and paced uneasily backwards and forwards.

"By her calculation it could not be more than eleven o'clock.

"She had therefore an hour before her if the maniac adhered to his former plan. The suspense was agonizing.

"She lay with her eyes shut, counting the seconds, and waiting for a repetition of the sound; but all was as silent as the grave.

"Minute passed after minute. Half the hour was gone without any sign of her rescuers.

"Another quarter passed, and the madman began to take a last look at the pyre, and to make his final preparations.

Then he struck a light, and ignited the base of the mound of sticks.

The dry, resinous pine-wood crackled and spluttered, while long tongues of flame licked round the borders of the fatal bloodstone.

"He approached the door of the hut. 'The time has come, maiden!' he said.

"It must have been a weird sight—the column of fire shooting up into the air, throwing fantastic shadows among the gaunt fir trees and the Druidical stones,—within the circle of light the white-clad maniac, and in front of him the shrinking girl!

"He was in the very act of undoing the cords which bound her, when, from the mouth of the girl came a loud appeal for help and a chorus of human voices, all shouting together.

"The light of the fire had attracted the rescue party.

"The Druid started like a hunted beast. 'Too late!' he roared; 'too late!

"Thy doom is sealed! Thou must die!' He caught up the bench and the prostrate woman, and, running with incredible speed, he laid her beside the roaring flames, while he drew his long knife from his bosom.

"My poor wife's last recollection is of the fierce face looking down at her, the savage, colorless eyes, and the uplifted knife.

* * * * * * *

"When she came to herself, friendly faces were around her.

"Her head was pillowed upon my breast, and the first word that passed her dear lips was my name.

"The Druid was lying on his back, some little way off, with his head cut open.

"I shall never get such a stick again as the old friend which I broke that night over his crazy skull.

"It was touch and go, though, for if I had got up one moment later, the fellow's knife would have been in Mary's heart.

"We got her down to the inn at Llandurnan, but she developed brain fever next day, and for weeks her life was despaired of.

"Such an impression has the adventure made upon her that the least incident which may recall it has a very bad effect upon her.

"That is why I have concealed the episode of Dr. Price from her knowledge?"

"And the Druid?" I asked.

"Oh, he turned out to be a very well-known man of science and an archæologist.

"He had been erratic in his conduct, and was therefore confined in the Merthyr Lunatic Asylum, but he escaped some six months before, and all clue to his whereabouts was lost.

"He must have spent the whole time in this nook among the mountains, practising his pagan rites, and living on the goats and anything he could pick up.'

"What became of him, then?"

"Oh, that is about the queerest thing in the whole queer story.

"Whether the crack with my stick depressed some bump, or how it acted, I don't know; but the fact remains that when he recovered his senses he was as sane as you and I, and has as far as I know, remained so ever since.

"They kept him in the asylum for some time for fear of a relapse, but they left him out eventually.

"Hush! she's wakening up. Yes, they will have a lively time at the beginning of next season, to all appearance. Don't you think so, my dear?"

Waiting.

BY E. LINWOOD SMITH.

I CAN'T do it! I can write nothing worthy of her—nothing worthy my own deep, maidening love!"

And Carl Heine threw down his pen in despair, and looked about the bare walls of his poor little room as though he addressed himself to them; but no fairy imagining reflected itself on their dingy surface—no poetical dream took bodily shape to lend him inspiration.

Again he bent over his work.

A timid rap at the door aroused him.

Without lifting his head, he called out a summons to enter.

The door opened but a little way, and a girl's flaxen head was thrust through the aperture.

"Mother bade me ask you, Herr Heine, if you will not join us at supper.

"We have placed a seat for you at the table if you will honor us," spoke a sweet low voice, while a rosy flush spread itself over the young and winsome face.

The man looked up with a start.

She spoke of supper, and he had eaten nothing since his meagre breakfast in the early morning.

Could it be that it was already evening?

Yes; from his window he could see the sinking sun.

His head, too, was faint and dizzy.

His pulses throbbed.

It was another evidence of his landlady's thoughtful kindness.

They were poor people, but they often bade him to their humble board, when but for them he would have gone supperless to bed.

He rose now, and pushed the paper from him.

"Thank the good mother for me, Gretchen, and say I will be glad to come."

The young girl curtsied, and withdrew from her place on the threshold; but as she descended the stair she sighed deeply.

"He looked at me not once," she whispered to herself.

"Ah, me! It was of the Fraulein Etterberg he was dreaming. It is of her he always dreams.

"He is coming, mother," she said aloud, entering her own apartments.

"I think he had forgotten it was so late."

"Does not he always forget? It's my opinion he's so fond of the clouds he'll not be sorry to take up his final abode there," answered the elder woman, but not unkindly, as she bustled about among the tea-things.

A little later, and the subject of their remarks had joined them.

"It was kind of you to think of me," he said. "I begin to realize that I am hungry."

"It was Gretchen," said her mother. "I've something else to do than remember love-sick youths, who think only of the heart and forget the body."

"Then I must thank Gretchen;" he continued, though the words he had just heard brought a vivid flush to his handsome face.

And turning to the young girl with a smile, for the first time his eyes met hers.

Something he saw in their blue depths surprised him.

He quickly looked again, but the long lashes swept her cheek and hid them from his scrutiny.

Supper was but half over, when a bustle and sweeping of skirts announced a new arrival, and with but little ceremony a tall, beautiful girl entered the room.

Carl sprang to his feet.

Frau Winstein, too, arose, but Gretchen, pale and silent, remained seated.

"Ah, Herr Heine, you here?" she said, bowing to the others as she spoke, but her glance turning last towards him, and resting there coquettishly, not unmindful of the admiration in his look.

"Do you know they say the prize has been awarded for the great poem, and that some one in our village has been the lucky man?

"Who can it be? Every one is all curiosity."

Carl Heine's face grew deathly pale.

The prize for the great poem offered by the conservatoire, and to attain which would make the fortune of any man!

He would have no trouble henceforth to find publishers for his work.

He would no longer have to solicit but be solicited.

Nor was the prize in itself to be disregarded.

It was a right handsome sum in money, and entitled the lucky winner, besides, to certain privileges, which to a man of letters were invaluable.

No one knew that Carl had been a contestant.

It seemed so presumptuous for him, in his lone'y humble garret, to even compete; but, alone in the hush of midnight, an idea had been born to him, and he had risen quickly and first let his bewildered vision realize its beauty, and then clothed its nakedness, and adorned its crudeness, until the day-dawn marvelled at the creation of the night.

For many days and many nights he toiled at its perfecting.

He would have toiled on ever, ever unsatisfied, but that the time for its reception by the academy was limited; and on the last day vouchsafed him he sealed his work and sent it in.

But first he signed it—not with his own name; his courage for that was wanting—but with a nom de plume, and his rightful name attached in a sealed envelope, to be opened only in view of success.

He smiled sadly as he thought of the seal for ever unbroken, but now Fraulein Etterberg declared the decision to have been made and ended.

"Who has won the prize?" he asked.

"No one knows as yet," she answered.

"Or, rather, they know only by the fictitious name he has assigned."

"And that?"

"Edgardo!"

He sank back, white and breathless.

Gretchen sprang to his side and held a glass of water to his lips.

Fraulein Etterberg laughed a little scornfully.

"Upon my word, Herr Carl," she exclaimed, "one would suppose you were on the list of disappointed aspirants."

A moment before he had been tempted to call out—

"Edgardo? It is I—myself! Rejoice with me."

But something in her tone hushed him.

She might be wrong too.

The thing was too marvellous to be believed.

Yet, oh Heaven, if it might be true!

To him it meant all things—fame fortune, love; for the winner of the prize poem might sue even for Elsa Etterberg's love nor be repulsed.

And he loved her—ah, how well, only his own heart knew.

She was the daughter of a well-to-do merchant in the town.

She might look above an humble poet: but she had smiled on him very kindly, and his heart had beat high with the hope that some day he might lay it at her feet.

No wonder the look he had surprised in Gretchen's blue eyes had startled him.

To him but one woman existed, and that one the beautiful Fraulied Etterberg.

He walked home with her that night under the stars, and though he meant not to have betrayed his love, his story stole through his lips though he said naught of the new hope which had given him courage.

To his wooing she answered neither yea nor nay, but she suffered him to carry her hand to his lips on parting, and promised to see him on the morrow.

When he returned to his room a new inspiration seized him.

He tore into fragments the lines which had so displeased him, and with hope and courage lighting new torch-fires in his breast, he hastily wrote verse after verse to her whose memory kindled them.

Carefully copying them, and dedicating them to Fraulein Etterberg, he signed himself by one word "Edgardo," then sank upon his bed and fell asleep.

Early the next morning the verses were dispatched.

In the evening, full of hope and happiness, he followed them; but the moment that he entered the presence of his divinity he perceived a change.

She no longer met him with smiles, but with indifference, cold and frigid.

When, tremblingly, he referred to her words of the night before, she laughed in his face, as she vaguely hinted of some splendid destiny in store for her, and marvelled at his presumption in supposing that she, the beautiful Elsa Etterberg, could receive the addresses of such as he, when those of highest honor in the land sued at her feet in becoming humility.

She had been kind to him—yes.

For her kindness his presumption had fittingly punished her.

She had loved him—never.

And again she laughed in mocking scorn.

Like a drunken man he reeled from the house.

What to him were his honors and his fame?

What to him the letter that day received, which he had carried with him to show her, telling him that the seal had been broken, and that he and Edgardo, the prize-winner, were one?

What to him the future now?

Her love alone had given him the incentive and the inspiration.

That gone, all else had perished with it.

His very success was hateful to him.

A strange impulse seized him to hide it from the world.

He was in no mood to bear the congratulations of men; and so, finding his way half-blindly to his room, he wrote a few hurried lines, asking that the identity of Edgardo with himself for a time be kept concealed—that there were very important reasons why he wished it so.

Confiding his letter to the post, he tottered back to his chamber, and flung himself face downwards on his bed.

The dawn found him still stretched there; but his lips babbled consciously of strange subjects.

The strain had given away.

The fever was upon him.

All the morning Gretchen waited for his tread.

When the day was half-done she stole to his door.

All the agony of her pent-up love was in her cry as she discovered him.

But his deaf ears heard and heeded not.

For weeks they despaired of the young life which waged with death so hard a battle.

But though he wished it not, life gained the victory.

His first conscious glance rested on the figure of his tireless nurse.

He remembered it all through his delirious dreams.

The child's face looked white and wan, but the blue eyes met his very calmly.

The look he had once surprised in them had fled.

Not until later did he learn how ceaselessly his delirium had betrayed his love—how nearly it had betrayed his secret.

Constantly had he spoken of Edgardo.

"It must be," thought Gretchen, "that he had tried, too, for the prize and failed, and the disappointment had brought on the fever."

Once, when the pulse was at the highest, she stole from his side, knowing he would not miss her, and found her way to Fraulein Etterberg's house.

It was the greatest triumph of her love, for it was its greatest sacrifice.

"He needs you," she said. "He calls upon your name. Will you not go to him? It may save his life."

But the other drew herself up haughtily.

"He presumed too far," she answered. "I am Edgardo's betrothed.

"He loves me. I await his coming. I cannot leave lest I should miss him."

And Gretchen, grieving for this new grief to him she loved, went sadly back.

But the world still asked—who was Edgardo? and no one answered.

As Carl Heine grew stronger he saw less of his nurse.

More and more she absented herself from his room.

More and more he missed her.

Had he been blind all these months he had lived with her beneath one roof, to be so unconscious of her sweet and winsome charm?

One day he spoke to her of Elsa.

Strange to say the old pain was deadened as he uttered her name.

"She is betrothed," answered Gretchen, lowering her eyes, that she might not see the white look of pain gather, yet deeming it best that he should know the truth.

"To whom?" he asked.

And in his voice was no tremor, nor had the color left his cheek.

"To Edgardo," the girl answered. "We know no more.

"I wished her to come here when you were so ill, but she feared to miss him in her absence."

A smile played about the invalid's pale lips.

He saw it all—the verses he had sent, breathing his soul's ardent love, and claiming her for his bride when he came in triumph to seek her, were signed Edgardo.

She had not dreamt to look for him in his humble person, and so waited and watched for her grand suitor in vain.

"So she would not come?" he said. "But you, Gretchen—if Edgardo had chosen you, what then?"

"I would have said him nay," she whispered.

"Nay? Not possible. Why, he will be great and rich. Care you nothing for this?"

"Not if my heart were poor," she tremblingly replied.

But something in her words made his soul leap with gladness.

He scarcely knew what sprung to his own lips in answer, but the next moment found her sobbing in his arms, and she knew that her heart would be poor never more.

A miracle had been wrought—Carl loved her!

A month later was their wedding-day.

But as they passed out from the church a great shout went up—

"Edgardo! Edgardo!"

His secret, for the first time, had been made public.

She turned to him blue, bewildered eyes.

"It is for you, that Elsa waits," she whispered.

"Ay, little one. Methinks her waiting will be long."

Rachel Heath.

BY P. R. NELSON.

ROYAL MOORE was Rachel Heath's first love, and she had reached the age of twenty-nine before she met him—quite an old maid; and yet at that age a woman knows her own mind, and her own love is much more likely to be lasting and true than the ardent passion of eighteen.

Rachel's life had been such that she had never any chance for what is called falling in love.

Her mother had died when she was very young, and the care of an old and sickly father had come upon Rachel.

She had fulfilled the trust faithfully.

She had borne all the old man's querulous fault-finding with gentle patience; she had submitted without a murmur to being kept in the sickroom while her young acquaintances were gathered together enjoying themselves; and though Mr. Heath might have spared her as well as not, she never called him selfish even in her thoughts.

He was her father, and to him she owed every duty.

So her sweet youth wore away and woman's crowning blessing was denied her: and her cheek lost its sea-shell bloom, and her dark eyes gathered shadows of thought and sadness which should never come to young eyes.

At last old Mr. Heath died, at the age of eighty-nine, and Rachel was left all alone.

It was then that Royal Moore came into her life.

He was a physician, and had attended her father for the last few weeks of his existence.

Something about the girl's calm, quiet endurance—something in the self-reliant strength of her character—touched Dr. Moore's interest before he had even noticed that she had a clearly-cut face, rather pale and a little sad, with large hazel eyes, and a wealth of curling brown hair.

Her figure was perfect, and, after all, there is no charm of beauty more potent in a man's eye than a fine figure.

It was not more than a month before the old, old story was told, and listened to with a strange and sweet delight.

This love of Dr. Moore's was so unlike anything poor Rachel had ever had shown her before, that she hardly dared be happy in it, lest it might elude her grasp and leave her more desolate than before.

Hitherto she had always had to think and care for everybody—all the planning and calculating, and "looking out" came upon her—but now all was changed.

One whose constant aim was to make her

happy was near her continually, and upon his strength her weakness relied, and her mind rested from care and perplexity.

A couple of months they had been engaged when Laura Sayres, a distant cousin of Rachel's, took it into her head that she needed the sea-air.

Rachel lived in the little sea-girt town of Brenton, and to "dear Cousin Rachel," Laura wrote, she was coming.

Rachel remembered her as a child—golden-haired, blue eyed, and waxen-faced—and of late years she had heard something of her wonderful beauty.

To tell the truth, Rachel was hardly pleased at the prospect of Laura's coming.

Perhaps she dreaded the bustle and excitement which this woman of fashion would bring her, and perhaps she shrank from any intrusion upon the sweet and tender relation between herself and Dr. Moore.

But one cannot insinuate to one's cousins than their proposed visits are unwelcome—which is one of the disadvantages of having cousins—and Rachel wrote Laura a very kind letter, saying her house was at her service.

Dr. Moore was not over pleased at the prospect, for he detested fashionable ladies, he said, and he had no doubt my lady Laura was frivolous and vain as the majority of them were.

He had so much rather have his little Rachel all to himself.

Then he kissed her forehead, and slid his arm around her waist, and drew her to his side, and they stood silently together, and heard the sea waves beat on the shore, and the crickets chirp in the grass, and neither of them dreamed of the cloud which was even then gathering in the calm sky of their felicity.

Laura Sayres came.

Just twenty, a slight, graceful girl, with hands like sculptured marble, and feet whose rare perfection of shape and tininess were admirably shown off by the exquisite Paris boots she wore; an arch rosebud of a face, framed in a mass of crinkly golden hair, tied up with azure ribbon, and falling in a shower of curls down her shoulders.

Yes, there was no gainsaying the fact that Laura Sayres was a beauty, and Dr. Moore, being a man, could not help admiring her.

She played and sang finely too, and he was fond of music.

Rachel foresaw that which was to come, but she bore up bravely against it, and was always kind and sweet to Laura, and gentle with Royal Moore.

Laura, accustomed as she was to being admired and flattered, appropriated Dr. Moore without hesitation.

Aunt Rachel had mentioned his engagement with Rachel to her, but Laura had lived in the world where engagements are formed and broken to suit the convenience of the parties, and she attached no importance to the communication.

"Why, aunt, engaged to that old maid! It is too bad. Why, Dr. Moore is one of the most splendid men I ever met."

"Laura," said Aunt Edith severely, "no man can be too good for Rachel Heath. She is the noblest and truest woman I ever knew."

"Oh, yes, auntie," returned Laura, "I know she is a perfect saint; but then she is so grave and old, and she wears her hair in such horrid style."

"Not a puff nor a frizz, and, I'll venture to say, not a thread of false hair."

"No," said Aunt Edith; "Rachel's head is too full of good sense to allow itself to be done up in hair from the scalp of any lunatic or criminal."

Laura flounced out of the room in a pet, and revenged herself by hunting up Dr. Moore, and coaxing him to take her out in a boat.

It was twilight when they returned, and Rachel watched them come up the walk with an odd pain at her heart.

She did not understand Dr. Moore.

Suddenly something seemed to have come between them, and to have changed the genial, happy young man into a restless and capricious trifler.

Rachel felt curiously afraid of him in these days.

She avoided being left alone with him, and shrank into herself more persistently than ever.

Sometimes she caught his dark eyes fixed upon her face with an expression of anxious doubt, and once he had detained her and asked her what was the matter.

And she had answered—"nothing," bravely repressing the tears which were ready to fall over the wreck of her brief happiness.

All the bright summer Laura lingered at Brenton, and Dr. Moore was ever her most devoted cavalier.

Riding or walking, the two were always together, and though Dr. Moore used at first to ask Rachel to come with them, she always declined, and after a time he ceased to ask her.

Laura confided her hopes to Rachel one night after the girls had gone to their rooms.

She should marry Dr. Moore, for she liked him vastly; and then he was rich and of a good family.

"I did think he was engaged to you," went on the selfish girl, "but, of course that is all over."

"No man loves and neglects a woman at the same time."

"And then you must be ages older than him."

"I am twenty-nine—Dr. Moore is thirty," said Rachel, in a cold, hard voice, which surprised herself, "and if he loves you. I should advise you to marry him."

"You are such a dear, good creature," cried Laura, kissing her, "and I am so glad that you do not care anything about him. It would be so awkward, if you did. So good-night and pleasant dreams."

Pleasant dreams indeed!

Poor Rachel never closed her weary eyes that night, and the next morning she looked so worn and ill that even selfish Laura insisted on bathing her head and coddling her to sleep on the sofa.

It was early autumn now, and the evenings were growing chilly.

Laura, all in a diaphanous cloud of white muslin and azure ribbons, sailed in just before it was time for Dr. Moore to come.

"How charming! Royal and I are to practise that new song together, and, really, it would have been chilly here without the fire.

"You are very thoughtful, Rachel. I wonder if I will be as good when I am as old?"

She went close to the fire, and held her small, white hands out to the ruddy blaze.

Her sweeping skirts trailed over the hearth, a breath of air from the opening door as Aunt Edith came in swayed them a little nearer, a tongue of flame seized upon the flimsy fabric, and in an instant the unfortunate girl was wrapped in a cloud of fire.

A fearful temptation beset Rachel.

If Laura perished, Royal Moore would be hers once more.

The thought went through her brain like lightning but she cast it behind her with impatient scorn.

The next moment she had torn up the hearth-rug, wrapped it around Laura, and, forcing the screaming girl down to the floor, she succeeded in smothering the flames, just as Dr. Moore entered the room.

She thought it was very strange that he should spring to her side, and ask if she were burnt, before he ever looked at Laura; but afterwards he lifted the poor young girl in his arms, and carried her up to her room, and dressed her wounds and soothed her as best he could.

By-and-bye he came down and found Rachel.

She had bandaged both her hands, for they were fearfully burnt, and she had told Dr. Moore she was not hurt.

"My dear little girl," he said, "you have deceived me; you are burnt. I must see after this."

And he took off the wrappings, and grew pale at sight of the scarred and blistered hands.

She submitted to him quietly.

His touch brought back to her some of the sweetness of the old time.

And she had made up her mind to tell him this very evening that he was free.

"Rachel," said he, when he had finished dressing the burns, "I want to talk to you a little while. You have given me no chance lately, and I have been very unhappy over it.

"I have at times almost begun to fear that, after all, you did not care for me as I thought you did."

"I desire your happiness above anything else," began Rachel, bravely; "and when I saw that you were pleased with Laura—and indeed it is not strange, for she is young and handsome——"

"Pleased with Laura?" said Dr. Moore. "I was never pleased with her dear. I have been playing, you will think, a very mean and dastardly game, but my conscience approves me.

"Two years ago, Rachel, that girl flirted with my brother Henry, and broke his heart.

"He was a young romantic and very susceptible. Her beauty enthralled him. She, like the heartless flirt she is, led him on, until he knew no rest nor joy away from her.

"Then when his devotion became troublesome—for there was another suitor on hand—she laughed at him for an idiot, and frankly told him she never thought of marrying him.

"She had only been amusing herself, and had supposed he was doing the same.

"Henry went to his room, locked the door and blew out his brains.

"When this girl, who had caused his death just as surely as though her white hands had held the fatal pistol—when she heard of it, she cried out—

"'What a fool; but there? I always thought he was rather weak; and he was so fond of me. Dear me how disagreeable it is to have men falling in love with one.'

"By the side of my poor brother's dead body I made a vow that if ever destiny threw this false and treacherous girl in my way, I would punish her for her sin against him, and I have kept my word.

"Perhaps it is not noble or generous for me to say it, but I believe she loves me. And, Rachel, darling, I love only you."

Despite poor Rachel's involuntary shrinking back, he took her into his arms and kissed her in the old slow, sweet way.

So her lost happiness came back.

Laura was not able to leave her chamber when Rachel and Dr. Moore went quietly to the village church one morning and were married.

And when Aunt Edith told Laura of what was going on—and Aunt Edith had a wicked sort of enjoyment in telling her—there was a scene.

The next day Laura went home.

Dr. Moore and his wife are living their contented, quiet, country life, all the happier maybe, for the cloud which once came across the heaven of their love.

When kicking a book agent across the lawn the man who is not the least bit of a philosopher begins to understand all the beauty of the axiom which teaches us that it is better to give than to receive.

OF NOTED MEN.

THOUGH in democratic America we have no titled rulers, yet nearly every man who has achieved distinction in any walk of life has his sobriquet, by which he is more or less widely known. Especially in this time of statesmen, politicians and soldiers.

These sobriquets are usually bestowed in recognition of some great achievement or achievements, or else illustrate some personal characteristic of the recipient.

Some of these democratic titles are trivial; others are of importance and form an accepted part of history and biography.

To begin with let us mention him that was "first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen," George Washington, who is so justly called the "Father of his Country."

It is well known that instead of this title he might have had that of king, had he chosen; but his patriotism was of too high an order to listen to such a proposition. Posterity will honor him the more in his choice.

Henry Clay, the man who "had rather be right than be President," was known as the "Great Pacificator," because of the compromise measures introduced by him in Congress.

These measures pacified the leaders of both factions, and serious difficulty was thereby averted.

Daniel Webster has been called "the Great Expounder of the Constitution," and is now often referred to as "the god-like Daniel," from his majestic presence.

John C. Calhoun, the Southern statesman, bore the sobriquet of "the Great Nullifier."

Thomas Jefferson was well styled "the Sage of Monticello." He was a scholar, "and a ripe and good one." John Adams, who died upon the same day as Jefferson, and who was closely associated with him in the early days of the Republic, was a man of great capacity, but personally and politically unpopular. He was called in derision by his neighbors "the Duke of Braintree," from his cold and aristocratic manners.

Andrew Jackson gained the title "Old Hickory" from his toughness and obstinacy. Though obstinate and very tenacious of his opinions, he was a man of strict integrity and undoubted patriotism.

John Quincy Adams, who served many years in the house of Representatives after being President, was appropriately called "The Old Man Eloquent."

Stephen A. Douglas was known as the "Little Giant."

William Henry Harrison was sometimes called "Tippecanoe," in recognition of his victory at the battle of that name.

Zachary Taylor was termed by his soldiers "Old Rough and Ready."

The martyr Lincoln bore through life, and will ever bear in history—the sobriquet of "Honest Abe."

How well he deserve it! Honesty, kindness and simplicity were the most prominent characteristics of the man whose memory the nation honors as that of one of her greatest statesmen and wisest rulers.

General Grant has been styled "The Silent Man," and during the war was sometimes called "Unconditional Surrender Grant, the initials of these words being the same as those of his name.

General Marion, of Revolutionary fame, during his campaign in the South gained the name of "The Swamp Fox."

General Anthony Wayne was called "Mad Anthony," because of his bravery and impetuosity.

The dashing cavalry commander, Major Henry Lee, became "Light Horse Harry" [illegible] General Joseph Hooker "Fighting Joe," while General George H. Thomas will ever be known as the "Rock of Chickamauga."

The Confederate general, Thomas J. Jackson bore a name gained in a somewhat similar manner. At the battle of Bull Run, General Lee, of the Confederate army, while encouraging his men, pointed to Jackson, saying:

"There stands Jackson, like a stone wall."

Ever after this he was known as Stonewall Jackson, many believing it to be his real name.

No faculty is developed, no quality is acquired, no power is gained, except by constant exercise. If we desire our young people to grow up into valuable men and women, we must accustom them gradually but steadily to assume responsibility, to exert their will and form character, to rest on reason as to rules of action, to act as well as to learn. Every well-meaning person of large influence, every teacher, every parent, who will prepare the way for the stronger calls of the next, and each of all these will bring new light, broader views and higher ability to bear upon increasing duties and responsibilities as they arise.

From Death's Door.

Many who were thought by physicians and friends to be at death's door have been restored to their families and to comparative good health by the new Vitalizing Treatment of Drs. Starkey & Palen, 1109 Girard St., Philadelphia. The cures in Consumption, Catarrh, Neuralgia, Bronchitis, and various Chronic diseases are indeed wonderful, and are attracting wide attention. Nothing like it is known in medical history. If you have an interest in learning all about it, its new Treatment, write to them, and pamphlets and reports of cases will be promptly mailed.

New Publications.

"Clythe," is the title of a romance of the sixteenth century translated from the German of George Taylor by Mary J. Safford. Like others of its kind it deals with habits, persons, and ideas of the time in a manner at once entertaining and historically instructive. Many of the leading characters of the period, civil, military and religious take part in the scene and the great movements in which they figured receive more or less intelligent treatment. To the literary epicure Clythe is nothing strikingly different from much offered by the other schools of novel-writing, and with all its merits, we can recommend "Clythe." Gottsberger, New York, Publisher. For sale by Porter & Coates. Cloth, 50 cents.

Mrs. A. L. Wister's latest translated novel from the German is called "Quicksands," by Adolph Brieksfuss. There is a certain family likeness in these romances by different authors, and what is better they are all youthful in tone. But the variations are many and marked. In "Quicksands" we have two young men strangers to one another, both intending suicide, and when one attempts it he is rescued by the other. From this comes a change of names and, so far as can be predicated in a fiction, of careers. Some confusing scenes follow, and there are odd turns of fortune; the rescued man turns out to be a rogue and his rescuer a hero. He is thrown into a new social set, under the ignoble name that he has assumed and there is of course much love-making with the usual incidents. This hint of the plot will naturally suggest that it bears promise of being a good story, and a perusal will put it beyond doubt. Price $1.50. Lippincott & Co., Publishers.

"Rapid Ramblings in Europe," by W. C. Palkner is a finely printed, bound, and ornamented book which would give rise to an impression from its appearance, there is more in it, than in really the case. Books of travel on the continent, especially over the beaten track, are entirely too plentiful to cite much interest or win more than a passing notice. This one is readable enough to the general public. The author accompanied several members of his family and some friends, [illegible] take the "grand tour." What they saw and heard and how it set down is somewhat interesting in and we may say, often [illegible] if not witty manner. We don't [illegible] the reasons given, whether it will [illegible] The declination is unique, and the steel and wood-engravings of the different members of the party, with which the book is embellished, while doubtless very good, will hardly prove of any great interest to the general reader. Price $2.00. Lippincott & Co., Publishers.

MAGAZINES.

The contents of *The Unitarian* for July are: Canned Goods Drunkenness in Great Britain; A Shoe That Will Not Pinch—A Short Study in the Hygiene of the Feet, illustrated; The Cholera Epidemic in Egypt; Sewers as Life Preservers; International Sanitary Conferences in their Commercial Relations—Quarantine; Disposal of the Dead, Lingering Cremation; How to Save Teeth from Decay; Editor's Table; and Literary Notices. Price 35 cents a copy. Published 113 Fulton St., New York.

St. Nicholas for June partakes strongly of the fields and the woods. The frontispiece Daisy Time, is a charming picture, and the many other illustrations in the number are pleasing in design and first class in execution. The instalments of The Scarlet Tanager, by J. T. Trowbridge, and Marion and His Hunters, by Maurice Thompson, are fresh and inviting. Miss Alcott's sixth Spinning-wheel Story, is an interesting [illegible] the Middle Ages, Frederick of [illegible], the Boy emperor, is another [illegible] Stories, by George Bowerman. Queer [illegible], by Mrs. S. B. Herrick, is a paper on [illegible] hunting. A live story for boys in W. W. Fenn's Two Lads of Maplewood, and Sarah Anna Brooks' [illegible] paper for girls, entitled Margaret's Favor Book. There are several poems and the departments are full of entertaining. The Century Co., New York.

Longfellow furnishes a charming frontispiece for the opening story of the June *Wide Awake*, The Cow with Golden Horns, one of Mrs. Wiltse' fanciful stories. A timely paper is About Wars in Elephants in general and Barnum's white [illegible] in particular. No. VIII of Jessie Fallen, The Girl at Last, treats of [illegible] Mrs. John Sherwood has a bright boyish [illegible] story, and Miss [illegible] an interesting paper about Sarah [illegible] Stowe, with a [illegible] by Bedloe. Edward Everett Hale [illegible] to the [illegible] Among the many [illegible] are [illegible] Wide Awake Supplement is excellent in matter, a peculiarly seasonable article being Mr. Skinner's Hints to Young Peanut [illegible]. Terms $3 a year. D. Lothrop & Co., Publishers, Boston.

A MAN left a bony steed in the street and coming back a short time afterwards, discovered that a funny youth had placed a card against the fleshless ribs, bearing the notice—"Only wanted—Inquire here."

A well-known preacher makes the recommendation of Ayer's Pill a matter of religious duty. When people are bilious and dyspeptic, what they need is the Gospel of Health. To such cases, the best creed to swallow consists of the thirty sugar-coated articles in a pill-box.

Our Young Folks.

THE BEARS' PARTY.

BY PIPKIN.

"MY love," said Mrs. Bear to Mr. Bear, as they sat at breakfast, their two young cubs being outside the hollow tree where they dwelt; "the little folk are having a merry time of it over the water this Christmas season; what say you to our giving our young people a like pleasure?"

"With all my heart. What shall it be—a ball, a concert, or a Christmas tree?"

"Neither," replied Mrs. Bear, with a toss of her grizzly head; "what people you gentlemen are for doing things grandly. Now I was thinking of a dance, and a snug little supper afterwards."

"Ah! right, as you always are;" and then they talked of this and that in a low whisper, because of the four ears outside.

The possessors of the said ears were little Master Nimble-toe and little Miss Long-nose, his sister.

"Mother, what were you and father talking about?" inquired Nimble-toe, as the two came bounding in, just as their father wiped his mouth with his paw, and their mother removed the cloth.

"Young people must ask no questions," replied she, while her husband retired into the recesses of the tree.

"Something about a Christmas tree, mother?" said Long-nose.

"Hoity toity! What next I wonder?" returned her mother, as she tied on her apron, and went about her household work.

Meanwhile, Mr. Bear emerged from his retirement, quite a dandy in his apparel.

"Mother, where's father going, wearing his best hat and trousers?" asked Nimble-toe, as she stood, duster in hand, outside the hollow tree to watch him off, the two young ones with her.

"Little bears must see and hear a great deal, and ask no questions," she told him; "now, dears, go and play, for I am busy."

"I wonder where father's off to?" persisted Nimble-toe, but he soon forgot to wonder, playing with his sister in the dear old forest.

Meanwhile the sun rose higher, and Mrs. Bear, up to her eyes in concocting and commingling of dainties, feared the day would be too short for what she had to do. However by noon, she had all to her heart's content, so, donning her best gown, and smoothing her shabby hair, she was just setting out as mysteriously as her husband before her, when the two young ones came bounding up, as hungry as bears could be.

"Mind and be good cubs; I've left your dinners for you."

So she admonished them, and tramped away through the forest as they watched her.

"I wonder what's going to happen?" said they; but they ate their dinners, and then another thing puzzled them.

"I wonder what nice smell this is in the place," quoth Nimble-toe, and went prying round the house till he came to the larder.

"Ho, ho! I know," cried he to his sister, clapping his paws in glee.

"What is it? What is it?" she responded, diving after him.

Oh! what hidden dainties met their eyes! Honey, roots, and fruit, prepared in a dozen different ways, as only bears know how, but all deliciously tempting.

Choice jam to children was a nothing compared to what this was to them.

"Wasn't mother sly to hide away all these things," said Nimble-toe, dipping his paw here and there tasting, smacking his lips as he gobbled and ate.

And, I am sorry to say, his sister was no wiser, no more trustworthy, no more honest, ah, they tasted and tasted till it was all gone!

"Mother may have meant it for us; in fact, I fancy she did"—so they quieted their consciences as they sat outside the hollow tree and watched for their parents' return.

Mr Bear arrived first, a large parcel under his fore paw.

"Well, cubs, where's your mother?"

"Gone out dressed, father," returned Long-nose, feeling the mysterious parcel with her paw.

"Ha, ha!" laughed he, "that's right;" and neither of them dared to ask him what he'd bought.

Anon, their mother appeared in the red sunlight of evening, and they gamboled to meet her.

"Well, have you been good cubs?" she inquired.

"Yes, I think so," returned Nimble-toe, winking at his sister, and trying to make her laugh.

"And just so; and here we are, and here's father," quoth the unsuspicious mother, entering their abode.

"And here's the concertina from town for mother," said Mr. Bear, waggishly, producing what had puzzled them both.

"Yes, my dears," their mother told them; "now the secret is out; we're going to have a party, and I've been to invite the guests, and they're coming.

"The Misses Porcupine, the three Masters Fox, and the two Misses Rabbit."

"Oh, mother, how jolly!" and the two wild things danced for joy; yet their hearts sank as they remembered the preserves and dainties they had gobbled up.

"I wish we hadn't done it," whispered Long-nose, as they combed their hair in their own corner.

"Mother ought to have told us," said her brother, coming closer to her, comb in hand.

Ah well! the frisky young guests began to arrive, and mother's new concertina began to send forth rapturous strains.

Never such a graceful party tripped it lightly on the toe as did these young creatures outside, in the solemn moonlight, under the Christmas stars, and Master Squeaky Fox, who had a fine voice, but was no dancer, sat and watched the proceedings; and then he distributed winks and nods.

"Master Squeaky shall sing one of his songs," said Mrs. Bear in high good humor, as yet knowing nothing of the raid on her larder.

"Yes, Master Squeaky shall sing, and I'll help him with the chorus," added Mr. Bear, who loved a good song.

"Now we'll have the Forest Quadrille, and then supper after Master Squeaky's song," were Mrs. Bear's words as the evening waned, at which the two young bears clung hand to hand as they danced, too faint at heart for Squeaky Fox's winks and nods to amuse them.

The quadrille ended, Squeaky's song was sung, the refrain of which was—

"The moon shines bright,
Our hearts are light,
With naught but mirth in the air, oh!"

Mrs. Bear laid down her instrument.

"Now for supper—Mr. Bear, help me to lay the cloth," were her words; whereupon that gentleman, with a proud smile on his lips, went to do her bidding.

Bears do not turn pale, bears do not usually faint, but the two young thieves shook in their skins, you may be sure, when their father came from the larder and cried, "Mrs. Bear! Mrs. Bear! Mrs. Bear!" as she mingled with her guests here and there.

"Bring the prepared dishes first," said she, with calm dignity.

"There are no prepared dishes," returned the mystified Mr. Bear; "only a mess and a little of empty dishes," he added, with a masculine want of tact.

"Yes, yes, there are," and the hostess, with a gracious smile; and away she went to see for herself.

But alas! she might have been Mother Hubbard, for aught her cupboards or shelves afforded.

"Cubs," said she, returning to where they and her guests sat round the table; "have you been meddling with things in the larder?"

"Yes, mother, we've been meddling," replied shame-faced Nimble-toe—too brave to tell a lie.

A silence fell—then the father and mother spread a frugal repast of such as their house afforded, in sorrowful dignity. None of the guests were ill-mannered enough to remark on the lack of delicacies befitting the season, but Master Squeaky Fox was heard to remark to his brothers on the sly—

"I do believe those young gourmands gobbled up the good things prepared for us; they are a low, bad-mannered set."

Then the parents' humiliation was complete.

"My cubs, you have taken away our good name as parent bears, and spoilt your first Christmas party," were their mother's words, kissing them good night as the Christmas bells chimed their sweet music through the forest, and their father's step could be heard outside as he smoked his pipe in sorrow.

THOSE TWINS.

BY RANDALL W. BAYLE.

THERE never was a prouder man than Mr. Horatio Jones when he found himself the parent of a fine pair of twins—a boy and a girl.

He implicitly credited the statement of the nurse, that the boy was the finest and the girl the loveliest infant ever born within her knowledge; and his face beamed with delight when old Mr. Booker detected unmistakable bumps of genius on the head of the male infant; and Mrs. Martin asserted that the nose of the girl, which at present seemed of no particular or definite shape, gave certain promise of turning out a pure Grecian.

Mrs. Martin who had had twelve children of her own, must of course know.

Mrs. Jones' mother—Mrs. Crutchings—had of course, been with her daughter several weeks previous to the birth of the infants; and immediately on receiving intelligence of that important event, grandma Jones arrived, for the purpose of congratulating her son and looking after the welfare of the new additions to the house of Jones.

It was during her stay that the important question of choosing names for the twins was discussed and decided.

It was on a Sunday, and uncle and aunt Jackson and cousin Joshua had been invited to dinner, after which Miss Arabella Walters an intimate friend of Mrs. Jones, had dropped in, speedily followed by Mr. Weatherby Jones, a distant relative of the family, though on very familiar terms with them.

Seated around a cosy fire, with port wine and walnuts on a round table, the company were very pleasant and cheerful, until after awhile cousin Joshua inquired what the twins were to be called—a subject which had never been in the remotest manner alluded to by either grandma Jones or grandma Crutchings.

"Ahem!" said Jones, with a proud air, "it occurs to me, since there are so many of us met together this evening, that it would be a favorable opportunity of choosing names for the babies."

"Suppose we have 'em in and see what they look like," said cousin Joshua, a bald-headed, jolly-looking old gentleman.

"Then we can choose names to suit them."

Accordingly a message was dispatched to the nurse, and that important personage soon entered, bearing upon each stout arm a very tiny and very pink specimen of infantile humanity, buried in a froth of lace and ruffles.

The company gathered around and minutely inspected the pair, with many comments and expressions of admiration.

"The image of his father," said Mrs. Jackson; "and the girl—bless the teeny-weeney itty darling!—the perfect type of her mother."

Jones looked highly gratified—until Mr. Jackson observed, with sideways poise of his head—

"Well, now, to my mind they're like nobody I ever saw before, except—other babies.

"They're all as much alike as a bushel of peas."

Mrs. Jackson, a large woman of commanding aspect, cast a glance of severe admonition at her husband.

He was a little nervous-looking man, whose misfortune it was to be perpetually doing and saying ill-timed things, though with the best intentions in the world.

After a sufficient amount of petting from their grandmothers, and of raptures from Miss Arabella, with a distant stare from Mr. Weatherby Jones, who seemed rather afraid of them, the twins were borne away, and the discussion of their future names was resumed.

"As there seems to be no personal peculiarity about them to suggest a name," observed cousin Joshua, "any ordinary name will do—only being twins, you see, the names like the owners, should resemble each other.

"What do you say to Thomas and Thomasia, or Samuel and Samuella, for instance?"

"Oh, no, indeed!" said Mrs. Jones quickly.

"No common names for my babies; something pretty and striking—though I don't object to the names being somewhat alike, considering that they are twins."

"I wouldn't have 'em alike if I were you, Emily," said her mother.

"The children are enough alike already, and if they have the same sounding names, they'll never be able to know themselves apart."

The company admitted the reasonableness of this objection.

But cousin Joshua would not give up his point.

"Twins ought to have twin-like names," he maintained.

"Names that pair together, as it were. Such as—as——"

And he scratched his head with a puzzled air.

"Bell and Beau," said Mr. Weatherby.

"Jack and Gill; or maybe, Punch and Judy would do," said Mr. Jackson, and immediately shrank up under the withering glances cast upon him.

Nobody but cousin Joshua laughed, and Mr. Weatherby Jones looked from the window and remarked absently that it was a fine day.

"Oh!" cried Miss Arabella, clasping her fair white hands in sudden ecstasy.

"I have thought of everything. Paul and Virginia!"

Mr. and Mrs. Jones seemed pleased at this suggestion.

"I am sure they are very pretty names," said Emily, looking appealingly at her husband.

"What do you say, dear?"

"Well, really, my love, I see no objection if you like them."

"Nor I," said cousin Joshua.

There was a pause.

"I never knew any one of the name of Paul," commenced grandma Crutchings solemnly, "who didn't turn out badly.

"There was Paul Simpkins, who fell off a gate-post and broke his left hand forefinger when he was only four years old; and Paul Hicks sent to prison for stealing; and —and——"

"But there was the Apostle Paul, ma," said Mrs. Jones. "He was a saint, you know."

"The Apostle Paul lived in old times," replied Mrs. Crutchings decisively.

"Things are changed since then. Besides, he was cast into prison and put to death, as you know," she added, looking around with an air of superiority.

"Well, isn't it be a good idea," said Mr. Weatherby Jones, "to give the boy the name of some great man?

"The consciousness of being a second—aw, hum!—Hannibal or Cicero would probably have a good influence upon him, and render him ambitious of preserving the honor of the name, and of emulating the fame of his illustrious namesake."

"Ma," said Emily, observing that her mother had not spoken, but sat with hands stiffly folded and pursed-up lips, "can't you suggest something?"

"If your own feelings, Emily, as the daughter of one of the best of men and fathers, have not suggested to you a name for your boy—your first boy—than I regard it as useless my making any suggestion."

There was a dead silence, and everybody looked at everybody else.

"You go for fancy names, perhaps, ma'am?" said cousin Joshua.

"Pray what was the Christian name of your late respected husband?"

"His name sir," responded the widow solemnly, "his name was Nicholas Peter Crutchings; and a better or more amiable tempered man never lived."

Here grandma Jones gave an audible sniff; and Mr. Jackson observed pleasantly—

"Yes, madam, I remember him very well, and that his name was Nicholas—for the boys in the street used to call him Old Nick, which naturally riled him considerably.

"Many a thrashing I've seen him bestow upon those young rascals."

"I have always thought," commenced grandma Jones, with great deliberation, "I have always been under the impression that a man's first boy would naturally be named after himself or his own father.

"My husband's name was Thaddeus—Thaddeus Jones."

"On the contrary, ma'm," said Mrs. Crutchings frigidly, "if you will excuse me—I have already understood it to be the custom for the eldest son to bear the name of his mother's family—thus notifying distinctly what two families he represents."

"Crutchings Jones," murmured Mr. Horatio Jones critically.

"Thaddeus Horatio would sound rather better, I should think," said the mother loftily.

"If you have no regard for the memory of your blessed father, Horatio, and no desire to perpetuate in your family the remembrances of his virtues, then it is useless my saying anything further.

"As to myself," she added with dignity, "I trust that I can do my duty as a grandmother to your daughter, whether or not she is called by my name."

Here the old lady's voice faltered, but she would not yield to the momentary weakness produced by the consciousness of neglect and injury.

She adjusted her cap and looked defiantly around.

"Well," said Jones' mother-in-law, with sarcastic emphasis, "I must say that when a person expects a young woman to overlook and slight her own mother, and name her first girl-baby after another person—why I'm prepared for anything."

"I should think, ma'am that a person would have a right to expect it, so long as she is in her own son's house."

"Oh, ma'am, I don't intend to dispute that question; and I am sure I have no intention of being an intruder in the house of my own daughter's husband. If my presence inconveniences you——"

"Ma," interrupted Emily pleadingly.

While Jones whispered something in the ear of his maternal parent which caused her to bridle up with—

"I am sure, Horatio, that I don't intend or desire to produce any unpleasantness. I am the last person——"

And here she applied her handkerchief to her eyes and left the room, at the same moment in which Mrs. Crutchings, with all her little curls in a tremble, sailed out by the opposite door.

A dead silence fell upon the company.

Jones looked extremely uncomfortable, and his wife began to show signs of nervousness.

Mr. Weatherby Jones sucked the head of his cane, and Miss Arabella pensively toyed with her watch-charms.

"I don't see," said Mrs. Jackson meditatively—"I don't see how the question is ever to be settled, unless you allow the twins to grow up and choose names for themselves."

"Or call them after everybody at once," suggested her husband.

For once his idea was considered worthy of attention.

Cousin Joshua immediately took it up.

"Suppose you call the boy after both his grandfathers—Thaddeus Peter—and the girl after both her grandmothers."

"Jerusha Jane Jones! What a name!" sobbed Emily.

"Couldn't we prefix some ornamental name," said Miss Arabella, "by which the little darlings might be usually called?"

This proposition being approved, it was further proposed that the grandmothers themselves should have the privilege of choosing these qualifying first names.

The two ladies were thereupon waited on and informed of the arrangement.

Mrs. Crutchings was discovered to be packing her trunk, and Mrs. Jones reading a sermon upon "The Trials of our Earthly Life."

But they were induced to return to the company, and though neither appeared perfectly satisfied with the new arrangement, a more harmonious feeling was soon restored.

"I think," said Mrs. Crutchings thoughtfully—"I think Eglantine the prettiest female name in the world.

"It was the name of the heroine of a novel which I wrote at boarding-school.

"And," said grandma Jones pensively, "there is, in my opinion, no nobler-sounding name than Hamilton.

"I had a lover of that name—my first lover—whom my papa forbade my marrying."

So the twins were called "Hamilton Thaddeus Porter," and "Eglantine Jane Jerusha."

But there's no foreseeing the course of human events, and to this day the Jones twins are known to all their acquaintance by the twin-like abbreviations of "Ham and Eggs."

Important.

Philadelphians arriving in New York via Cortland Street Ferry by taking the 6th Avenue Elevated Train corner Church and Cortland Streets, can reach the Grand Union Hotel in 42d Street opposite Grand Central Depot in twenty minutes, and save $3 Carriage Hire. If enroute to Saratoga or other Summer resorts via Grand Central Depot, all Baggage will be transfered from Hotel to this Depot, FREE. 600 Elegantly furnished rooms $1, and upwards per day. Restaurant the best and cheapest in the City. Families can live better for less money at the Grand Union, than at any other first class hotel in the city.

SON AND DAUGHTER.

When the roses of summer were budding and blooming
And the yellow wheat bent 'neath its burden of gold,
The Prodigal Son came, world-weary and tattered,
To the home where his footsteps had echoed of old.

And they clung to his garments with tears and caresses,
Till the cup of his welcome ran over with joy,
And the flowers of love and forgiveness were woven
In a blossoming crown for the Prodigal Boy.

When the icicles hung from the eaves and the branches,
And the winter winds moaned round the dwellings of men,
Forsaken and homeless, the Prodigal Daughter
Crept back to the home of her girlhood again.

But they turned her away in the storm and the darkness
To the icy-cold winds with their chill, piercing breath,
And the pitiless curses that followed her footsteps
Were fierce as the tempest and cruel as death!

ABOUT THE ROSE.

AN old legend tells us that Flora, having found the body of a beautiful nymph, resolved to immortalize her by transforming her into a plant which should surpass all others in its charms. She summoned Venus and each of the Graces to assist in the ceremony.

The Zephyrs cleared the atmosphere to allow Apollo to bless with his beams the new flower; Bacchus contributed nectar to nourish it, and Vertumnus supplied its perfume, while Flora crowded it with a diadem which was to distinguish it as the queen of flowers.

The Rose may truly be called cosmopolite, as it is found in almost every country, and is everywhere equally prized for its delicate perfume and useful properties.

Among the ancients it was highly valued, and from the earliest times its virtues and attractions have been appreciated, and its charms have caused it to be interwoven with the history, romance and poetry of all ages.

The Rose tree is supposed to be a native of the east, as the word Syria signifies "the land of Roses," and one of its richest varieties bears the name of one of the world's oldest cities.

Chaplets of Roses were early worn on festive occasions, and Roses contributed largely to the adornment of the luxurious homes of the Greeks and Romans.

The first Rose ever seen is said to have been given by Cupid to Harpocrates, the god of silence, to engage him to preserve the secrets of the amours of his mother, Venus; hence, it became the symbol of silence among the ancients, and was carved on the ceilings of their banqueting halls, and as it was considered a breach of honor to reveal whatever transpired during their convivialities, the expression, "sub rosa," was used to denote secrecy.

The island of Rhodes received its name, according to some authorities, from the abundance and sweetness of its roses, and many of its coins, still extant, are said to bear the figure of this flower on the reverse, and now, as in ancient times, the breezes from that fertile isle are scented with delicious perfume.

The inhabitants of Sybaris were so effeminate in their habits of life that their couches were formed of the velvet petals of the Rose, and the luxurious Heliogabalus caused Roses to be strewn upon his guests until they formed a carpet many inches thick beneath their feet, and filled the air with their fragrance.

The Rose is the national emblem of England; on the eve of the struggle between the houses of York and Lancaster, a dispute took place in the Temple Gardens, as to the rights of the rival factions; the heads of the factions, the Dukes of Warwick and Somerset, appealed to their friends to take sides in the controversy, but they declined to commit themselves; whereupon Warwick plucked a white Rose, and Somerset a red one, each inviting his partisans to follow his example, and the innocent flowers thus became the badges of the contending armies in the romantic "war of the Roses," which ensued.

The city of Pæstum, on the coast of Italy, was celebrated for its exquisite Roses, which were further remarkable for blooming twice a year, and even now, when its three beautiful temples have fallen to decay and only a few scattered stones mark the site of its once noble edifices, here and there a straggling Rose-bush is still to be seen surviving the general ruin, and blossoming brightly each May and December, lending a peculiar charm to the deserted city; and it may be partially due to these faithful sentinels which soften hard outlines, and cover with a living mantle the dull, inanimate stones, that the ruins of this once beautiful city still attract the attention of the tourist, and are considered the most beautiful in the world.

Unlike many beautiful objects, the Rose possesses a utility which is wonderful. From it is distilled the attar of Roses, which forms an article of commerce in Syria, India and Persia.

The manufacture of this essence is attended with so much difficulty and expense that the cost of a single drop is often fabulous; but it is so extremely powerful that a vessel which has once contained even the smallest portion of it, will retain the delicious odor many years after the last drop has disappeared. As the poet beautifully expresses it:

You may break, you may shatter the vase, if you will,
But the scent of the Rose, will linger there still.

In pharmacy it is used quite extensively, whole fields of Roses being cultivated for the apothecary's use alone, from which he produces a variety of compounds and extracts, among which are the ointment of Roses, soothing in cases of inflammation; vinegar of Roses, a pleasant and refreshing remedy for headache; conserve of Roses, which was considered by the ancients a sovereign specific for a cold; honey and oil of Roses, beside the many perfumes for the toilet, flavoring extracts and various other compounds, all equally popular and pleasant.

The green leaves of the Sweet Brier can be dried and used as a substitute for tea; the fragrant petals of the flower are reduced to a paste and formed into amulets, charms, and beads; the rosaries used by some in devotional exercises are supposed to have been made originally in this way, and received their name accordingly.

Grains of Gold.

Superstition is a sort of parody of faith.

Almost the best rule of life is to be worthy of one's self.

God may put off those to-morrow who put Him off to-day.

Ungraciousness is wholly opposed to all ideas of good breeding.

The path of duty in this world is the road to salvation in the next.

A work of charity is a type of the charity within, in the soul and mind.

Patience is the panacea; but where does it grow, or who can swallow it?

Time once passed never returns; the moment which is lost is lost forever.

Egotism, vanity and selfishness spoil conversation far more than deficiency of talent.

God smiled when he put humor into the human disposition, and said, "That is good."

Contentment swells a mite into a talent, and makes even the poor richer than the Indies.

To the generous mind the heaviest debt is that of gratitude when it is not in our power to repay it.

A suggestion to the pulpit: Less oratorical pyrotechnics, and more head and heart argument.

In the whole universe there are no agents to work out the misery of the soul like its own evil passions.

The cultivation of a cheerful spirit demands as a first requisite that the conditions of health be observed.

Show us the man you honor. We know by that symptom, better than any other, what you are yourself.

There is hardly anything more necessary to the peace and harmony of domestic and social life than a spirit of conciliation.

We must regard every matter as an inviolate secret which we believe the person concerned would wish to be considered as such.

The training of the conscience, or moral sense, is the most delicate and important of all the duties devolved upon the teachers of youth.

We can all cherish a conception of a pure, virtuous and beautiful character, of just, generous and noble conduct, and strive to conform our daily life to our highest ideal.

By six qualities may a fool be known—anger without cause, speech without profit, change without motive, inquiry without an object, putting trust in a stranger, and wanting capacity to discriminate between a friend and a foe.

An Oriental potentate once bade his prime minister compose for him a motto that would answer both for seasons of prosperity and adversity. Here is the sentence which he engraved upon his signet-ring: "This too shall soon pass away."

Femininities.

Eleven States now allow women to vote in school affairs.

Over 400 women now practice medicine in the United States.

Gaiety, tempered by seriousness, is the happiest manner in society.

Mendon, Mich., has a paper edited and "set up" entirely by women.

Clothes don't make the man, but they give a woman a powerful boost.

Women can be, and many of them are, notaries public in the State of New York.

Remember, what women admire in themselves, is seldom what men admire in them.

A disagreeable girl—Annie Mosity; a fighting girl—Hittie Maginn; a sweet girl—Carrie Mel.

Miss Kate Sanborn, the lecturer, says that no two women are alike, but men can be arranged in bundles.

According to a Cincinnati paper, it is becoming fashionable for professional beauties to have their bodies tattooed.

Always dress up to your age, or a little beyond. Let your person be the youngest thing about you—not the oldest.

Always speak low. In support of this it is only necessary to quote Shakspeare, who calls it "an excellent thing in woman."

Jennie June does not believe in sombre-colored dresses. She thinks bright dresses are necessary to health and cheerful life.

Thirty States and Territories have more men than women, and seventeen States and Territories have more women than men.

Having pages at fashionable weddings is a pretty custom; they make it so much easier for a bride and bridegroom to turn over a new leaf.

"Bye-bye, love," he murmured, as he started down to his office in the morning, and she did, to the extent of a $50 bonnet. He says good morning now.

Whatever is fashionable is beautiful. Ask any woman you know whether it is not so. Whatever is old-fashioned must, by the same rule, be hideous.

In Holland they have a proverb which pronounces that "servants are a cross sent from God." The experience in this country is that they are sent from below.

A Georgia personal says: "Mr. Ed. Swint was in Sparta last Friday, wearing the ruffled shirt he was married in 18 years ago. It is a fine-looking shirt to this day."

Mrs. Piatt has written a poem to show that the only happy woman is a dead one. Hardly. We never saw a dead woman who appeared to be so tickled as a woman with a new bonnet.

Said a lady not long since in Paris to a simple-minded French chambermaid in a hotel: "You understand English, do you not?" "Yes, madam," she answered, "but I understand American better."

A London journal talks with some justice, but with a great deal more injustice, of "the sickly strain of ornate commonplaces with which this higher education of women is irritating our ears everywhere."

A bride of two weeks was mortally wounded by her husband at Buffalo, N. Y., recently. He was examining a pistol when she playfully pulled his arm. The weapon was discharged, the bullet entering her head.

A woman named Abbott, of Portsmouth, N. H., has been held in $500 for stealing a letter belonging to another woman, from the postoffice. The letter was written by a young man for whose favor both the women are rivals.

A new out-door game for ladies and gentlemen, called "Enchantment," is becoming fashionable in England. We have noticed that out-of-door games, when played by ladies and gentlemen, generally end in enchantment.

The London correspondent of a New York paper notes a recent marriage in a provincial town in which the bride brings a good fortune, to her groom in the shape of the heavy damages she got off him in a breach of promise trial.

One of the reasons given by a plaintiff at Evansville, Ind., in a petition asking for an absolute divorce from his wife, is that she prays God daily that he might die, and, as he is a firm believer in the efficacy of prayer, he is afraid that her appeal may be answered.

A new trick of New York thieves is to drop a dime at the feet of the woman whose pocket-book they have designs on, and whose whereabouts they thus discover if she picks up the coin and puts it in her pocket-book, as several victims have already done to their loss.

During a heavy gale at Newport, R. I., recently, the wife of Captain Stave was drifted away from shore, when alone in her husband's boat. She was out in the storm twenty hours, but, by her knowledge of nautical affairs, properly rigged the boat and safely weathered the storm.

A child, with a snake head, with all the motions of a snake, keen eyes that pierce you through, is living in Cobb county, Ga. Its mother killed a snake about a month before it was born, and the fright and shock she received at the time was clearly shown upon her child afterwards.

An Indiana girl was swinging in a hammock when a man passed her on horseback with a gun across the pommel of his saddle. The horse stumbled and jarred the gun. It went went off and hit the girl in the hammock. Her mother, who was in the kitchen washing dishes, was not hurt.

Little Florence was besieging her father to take her to visit her grandmother, who lived some miles distant. To get rid of her importuning, he said: "It costs $10 every time we go to see grandma, Florence, and $10 don't grow on every bush." "Neither do $10 grandmas grow on every bush," answered the little girl, promptly; and her logic was convincing. They went.

News Notes.

A dude is a 50-cent man in a $50 suit of clothes.

London averaged three fires a night during 1883.

Vassar girls consume 2,400 pancakes at one breakfast.

Little or no rain has fallen in Cuba the past four months.

The savings banks of New York State hold over $430,000,000.

Every street in the business part of Chicago is to be laid with granite.

It is computed that a flash of lightning lasts only one-millionth part of a second.

A woman in North Carolina is selling the darkies pieces of rock from the Garden of Eden.

There are 112,412 miles of railroad track in this country, of which 107,138 are in operation.

There are 3,985 paper mills in the world, which turn out 1,904,000,000 pounds of paper annually.

A little Maine girl has expressed herself as only hating two things—namely, Sundays and dying.

Bronze needles have been found in Egyptian tombs, which must have been made 4,000 years ago.

Citizens of Victoria, B. C., assembled in mass meeting the other day and denounced gambling.

The town of Decatur, Ga., has an ordinance forbidding children to play marbles on the streets.

Twenty years ago there were twelve women doctors in the United States. There are now over 500.

There are still living in Rochester, N. Y., 69 persons who voted at the first charter election, 50 years ago.

The Paris police arrested 200 vagabonds in one haul recently in the Tuileries Garden and the Louvre Square.

To supply the ivory trade, about one hundred and twenty-five thousand elephants are killed annually in Africa.

New York City is said to contain 10,000 liquor dealers, while the butchers, bakers and grocers combined number only 7,228.

In order to impart dignity to the town of Maros, Ill., forty of the merchants have signed a pledge to wear high silk hats.

A wealthy Long Island widower, 50 years old, has broken his engagement with a woman of 28, on the novel plea that she is too young.

A new kind of bug has been discovered whose particular weakness is for boring through lead pipes. It is called the "plumber's friend."

An old bachelor died at East Alburg, Vt., the other day, and $60,000 in bonds, notes and certificates were found in the lininge of his clothes.

By cutting off the noses of his hogs for three or four generations, a farmer in Berrien county, Ga., is said to have secured a breed of noseless hogs.

It is estimated that there are now in this country 250,000 manufacturing establishments, employing over 6,000,000 workmen, and $4,500,000,000 capital.

Dr. Hargis, now a prominent Methodist preacher, chose for the motto of his college society: "The devil take the hindmost," and graduated at the foot of his class.

Time works changes. "Forty years ago," says an observer, "butter was made of cream, sugar was made of cane, cigars were made of tobacco, and shoes were made of leather."

The latest craze in tamborine decoration is to make them take the place of the old-fashioned album. Some of them are covered with autographs of literary or other celebrities.

Hans Bulow is reported to have introduced a new feature in his concerts. In the adagio of Beethoven's ninth symphony he has the hall darkened and frankincense burned.

A South Carolina man thinks he has discovered that a chalk mark around a barrel of sugar is a cure for ants, and is now mad because the patent office refuses him a patent for it.

In Wheeling, W. Va., the School Board of that place has given notice that at school commencements this year no bouquets or other presents will be permitted to the graduates.

A wealthy coal-miner living at Youngstown, Ohio, has had his mind so affected by being defeated for a political office that he has been placed in a hospital for the insane at Cleveland.

Robert H. Terrell, a Virginia-born negro, who entered Harvard College as a waiter in the dining-hall, is to be graduated at the approaching commencement among the first seven of his class.

The "Ancient and United Order of Sons and Daughters and Brothers and Sisters of Moses and the World at Large" is the title of an organization composed of colored people, in Washington, D. C.

The first church erected on American soil is still used as a place of divine worship. It is situated just outside of the City of Mexico, and was built by Cortes during his second visit to that coast.

"Lucky" Baldwin, one of San Francisco's millionaires, was married recently for the fourth time. His bride is 20 years old; he is 60; she has good social position; he has ten million dollars. It is a fair bargain.

Atkinson, Me., has a blacksmith who keeps a dentist's chair in one corner of his shop, and pulls occasional aching teeth. He is also a good cabinet-maker, and when he can't get anything else to do he practices law.

The Bavarians propose to give the parishes the power to forbid the marriage of couples who do not possess sufficient means to maintain themselves, or who during the previous three years have not paid their quota of taxes.

How it Ended.

BY BLAKE PAXSO

I MIGHT have married better. I might have had a rich man.

"If I had accepted anyone of several good offers, I might have been living like a lady, with servants, and my own carriage, and all that I should like to have," was Mrs. Dunning's constant boast to her daughter.

And little Helen comprehended this bleat at an age when other children did not dream that "mother" would have married anyone but "father."

This was not the worst of it, however. In her little bedroom, leading from the common sitting-room, Helen heard her mother, over and over again, reproach her father—a quiet, honest, decent man—for never having risen to any higher position in life.

To be sure, his eyes had failed him so that he could not keep books; but was there nothing but being porter and night watchman?

The poor man ate his meals amid a storm of sarcasm and fault-finding, except just after pay-day, when, having more money than usual in her pocket, his better-half was good-humored.

He himself had very few expenses.

He was a contented man, now well on in years, who would have loved his wife had she permitted him to be quiet, and was very proud of his little golden-haired daughter.

The girl inherited her mother's disposition, though she was much prettier. She had also a greater knowledge of the fashions, of the quality of goods, and of what elegant people had in their houses.

But of all she would have enjoyed being idle and finding in her useless hands a perpetually full purse; but as this was impossible, she determined to earn some money for what she wanted.

Her father easily found her a place at the glove counter of the shop in which he had been employed for fifteen years, and she enjoyed for a while the pleasure of the fruits of honest industry.

On Sundays, in church, she looked so well, so elegant, so dainty at every point that her mother could not listen to the sermon for admiring her; and her father—always proud of her in every way—felt that she was a great comfort to him.

Soon that came which comes to most pretty girls.

James Selwyn fell in love with her.

He was only an assistant in the shop where they sold bonnets, shoes, ready-made costumes, and jewelry of an inexpensive sort, and where many people were employed; but other men married on his salary and he offered himself to Helen.

They were married in church, with quite a little flutter of white satin, orange flowers and pretty bridesmaids, and went to housekeeping in better style than that which Helen's father found it possible to maintain.

Helen, indeed, might have added to their income by keeping her place, but neither of the young people desired this.

In fact, the girl, who had never managed a household, believed herself much better off than she really was.

She found that she had not as much as before for her dress, and soon contrived to run into debt with butcher, baker, and grocer, in order to add to her costume articles that she declared she needed, and which could only be bought with ready money.

The discovery of this fact caused a little scene, and Helen, guided by her mother's advice, insisted on her right to be dressed well, and reproached her husband with cruelty.

For a month or two all was wretchedness.

Then suddenly Helen began to smile again, James looked happy and never had the young beauty been so well dressed.

"He saw the folly of being niggardly to me," she explained to her friends. "Men need a good talking-to now and then."

The mother, too, now had, every now and then some valuable present—a clock, a bonnet, furs, gloves.

She even stopped abusing her husband.

He was very happy.

The attention that his daughter paid him was gratifying.

Every night, about twelve o'clock, she sent him some hot coffee and some warm rolls.

His son-in-law brought them, and frequently stayed with him a long while.

Meanwhile there was something going on of which he was unaware.

A detective had been closeted with the proprietors, and a sword was hanging by a single hair over somebody's head.

It was night.

The old watchman was at his duty, when a tap came at the glass door of the shop—left open that the policeman might peep in as he passed. Dunning saw his son-in-law's face.

The young man carried the usual coffee, and wore a large overcoat, though the night seemed warm to Dunning. The old man had a good appetite, and sat down comfortably on a box behind the counter to eat and drink.

The son-in-law roamed about, and was soon out of sight.

He stayed with the old man that night, and took upon himself the task of going through the upper floors once an hour.

Such kindness, Dunning thought was very admirable; but the son-in-law declared that on Sunday he could sleep as late as he chose, and that it was fun to play watchman.

The dawn was breaking when he said good-bye, and the old man soon after went to his own home and went to bed, where he fell fast asleep, as usual.

He was aroused by a shriek. It came from his wife.

Hastily donning his clothes, he rushed into the sitting-room.

A man whose face he knew well stood there—his employer—and two strangers were with him.

They explained their business very briefly.

Armed with a search-warrant, they had come to arrest him, and seek in his apartments for stolen goods.

"Our safe was opened last night," said the man in whose service he had been so long, "and for a long while we have missed goods and jewelry. We must look here."

"And welcome," cried the old man. "You'll find nothing. I was at my post all night, and I had my son-in-law with me, too, younger and brighter than I.

"Nobody could have entered the place—at all events, you'll find no stolen goods here.

"Hannah, stand away; let these men search everywhere.

"Don't scream and shut your doors. Honest folk can't be hurt.

"I wonder at you, sir, thinking thus of me."

"We arrested your son-in-law an hour ago," said the gentleman, coldly.

"Arrested James—the good, kind boy!" cried old Dunning. "Fine pay for being so good to his wife's father! James! Hear that, Hannah?"

But meanwhile the officers of the law had opened trunks and boxes, and laid upon the floor a pile of clothing, more costly than the old man knew.

His wife's "Sunday" gowns and cloaks; her collars, which might have belonged to a millionaire's wife.

"I can swear to them all," sighed the old merchant, as deeply affected as his employer.

"Dunning, you can't pretend it possible these things have been bought with your salary.

"This collar is worth ten dollars, that black silk thirty."

"They are presents—presents from my daughter!" shrieked the old woman.

Dunning stared at her.

"I don't know the price of the things women wear!" he gasped. "I don't know what this means! I never took a penny that wasn't mine myself! I can't believe ——"

He staggered to an old sofa, neatly covered with flowered chints, and burst into tears.

It was easy to arrest him; he made no resistance.

It was not long before the truth was known.

James declared his father-in-law not his accomplice, but his dupe.

Even the mother-in-law could only have guessed that the presents bestowed upon her were ill-gotten.

He took upon his own shoulders the whole weight of the crime, and without attempting any explanation, pleaded guilty; and since the sum he had taken from the safe was a large one, was sentenced to five years' penal servitude.

To his father-in-law alone he made, in parting, an explanation.

"You have had Helen's mother for a wife," he said.

"You have endured reproaches from her because of your poverty.

"Helen is prouder than her mother; she knows better what rich women wear and have.

"I adored her. She cried for finery like a baby; she scolded and worried me.

"She blamed me for being poor. She sold me—her husband—her kisses and caresses—only bestowing them on me when I brought her costly gifts.

"Since I have been a thief she has seemed to love me.

"God knows, I have paid for my crime. If you can forgive me, try to do so."

The old man dropped his head on the young man's shoulder.

He could say nothing.

So they parted, never to see each other again.

Assured of his innocence, Dunning's employers offered him his place once more, but he could not hold up his head in the pride of his humble honesty as of yore. His daughter, his Helen, had been the cause of all, and James, near as a son to his heart, was a felon.

Torn by shame and sorrow, he took to his bed, and soon died there.

His death was soon followed by that of Helen, who never got over the disgrace caused by her greed for dress.

IN OLD DAYS.—In the old days no woman was allowed to put her foot within the walls of the monastery at San Augustine, Mexico. A noble lady of Spain, wife of the reigning Viceroy, was bent on visiting it. Nothing could stop her and in she came. But she found only empty cloisters, for each virtuous monk locked himself securely in his cell, and afterward every stone in the floor which her sacrilegious foot had touched was carefully replaced by a new one fresh from the mountain top. Times are sadly changed. The house has been turned into a hotel.

DELAY is dangerous. Heart Disease is cured by Dr. Graves' Heart Regulator. Price $1. Sold by Druggists.

RINGING THE BELL.

She seemed indifferent to his tender plea,
And was as deaf unto his whispered pleadings—
Nor to a single offer would agree,
But feigned she wished to break off all proceedings:
And all her care was to appear unpleasant
And ill at ease when he happ'd to be present.

With aching heart her lover bade adieu,
And hid, as best he could, his deep emotion;
The tears rushed to her eyes like early dew—
She barely could allay her love's commotion.
As time wore on she could no longer tarry,
But penned an humble note to her dear Harry.

It read: "I really did not mean it, dear,
'Twas but to test for me your soul's devotion,
And as your love, so is mine own sincere—
Of you bereft life's cup's a bitter potion;
Return, or my poor heart you'll wring forever—
Farewell to joy if I from you must sever."

He answers: "If my absence wring your heart,
Away from you I shall no longer linger,
But this resolve let me to you impart:
Besides your heart I'd like to "ring" your finger."

Then to her side with eager steps he hies
To seal that love by which their hearts are clinging,
And tho' the marriage bells fond hearts aye prize,
The sweetest is the bells that Harry's ringing.

—WM. MACKINTOSH.

Facetiæ.

By-the-way—Mile-stones.

Why are potatoes and corn like certain sinners of old? Because, having eyes they see not, and having ears they hear not.

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A piller of the church—A pious apothecary.

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What things increase the more you contract them? Debts.

Every affliction has its blessing. The man with a wooden leg never knows what it is to have rheumatism in that ankle.

The two-headed lady on exhibition says that two heads are better than one, or else she would not be receiving $25 a week salary.

The stingiest man is said to be a miserly old bachelor who talks through his nose so as to save the wear and tear on his false teeth.

A youth begged a Camden belle to give him something he could wear next his heart. She sent him a red flannel chest-protector.

A gun that is charged with powder is likely to go off. So is a treasurer that is charged with embezzlement, if he can get a chance.

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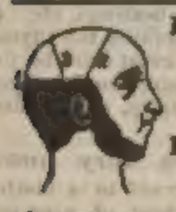

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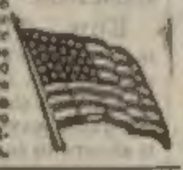

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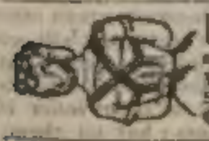

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Ladies' Department.

FASHION CHAT.

THE lately recovered fancy for alpaca and mohair amounts abroad to a positive revival.

These are the "new" materials for every day dresses, par excellence.

The mohairs especially, which now have a very fine, silky texture, are in great favor.

In Paris, they are used, in general, in two shades of Suede, "beige" or gray for a costume.

It is also not uncommon to see some shade of gray united with Suede, which may happen to harmonize especially well.

These suits have a durable, satisfactory look.

The "façon," the way of making, is rather simple.

Not much trimming. Occasionally some galloon, beaded with steel, for the gray dresses.

Also an "agraffe" or buckle of silver or steel.

For the trimming of the alpaca costumes—which are recommended for serviceable traveling suits—nothing better has been devised than rows of narrow velvet ribbon.

This is certainly very suggestive of "ye olden time."

Still, a French woman's innate tact and chic can give a modernized and attractive appearance to material even a little valuable, from an artistic point of view, as this.

With these vests of costumes are worn hats or bonnets of colored straw, matching the predominant color of the dress and trimmed generously with Spring flowers and ribbons, also a little velvet.

With the visiting and carriage costumes of changeable silks and brocades—almost all mixed with some ecru, either in the form of lace, or of embroidered tulle, or at least, of a small guimpe.

The bonnet is of gold or ecru lace, of silver gauze with velvet flowers embossed, or of the old-fashioned horse-hair, with silver or gold threads woven in with the braid.

The trimming consists again of knots of ribbon, narrow velvet strings and of flowers, bouquets, grasses and leaves.

The little spring mantles are of black silk grenadine, with flowers of velvet, sometimes with a touch of color and with linings of changeable taffeta in golden brown, orange, red, according to the degree of elegance.

The carriage parasols are all transparent, of soft lace, sometimes set off by some bright bows. Boots, shoes and slippers have decidedly low, flat heels.

High heels are sold only in the ready-made "chaussure" to the less fastidious class of customers. The hair is worn exclusively high, on the very top of the head and occasionally massed a trifle on one side, the other side being filled in and finished for the evening, or the ball, by knots or "poufs" of soft-figured gauzes, or gauze ribbons, and in the former case by flowers and aigrettes to boot.

Very young girls and debutantes have had a charming novelty invented for their use. Their simple coiffure is most poetically adorned with a thick, broad wreath of natural flowers, rosebuds, or other small, fine blossoms, set rather back from the face.

Nothing more youthful and pretty can be imagined than this floral crown. Add to it a short evening dress of tulle, or crepe lisse, over satin.

The thin material tucked in the front above a fluffy mass of little flouncings at the foot and forming behind what the Parisian dressmakers now call a "veil," that is, a full, straight drapery, plaited in at the waist, and floating down in vaporous folds, and finish the picture by conceiving a low bodice with surplice folds of tulle or crape coming modestly over the shoulders, and often drawn in at the waist under a belt of satin, with light sprays of hyacinths or lilacs and knots of pale gauze ribbons holding the same here and here, and one has the very perfection of evening attire for the rosebud age.

The revival of these gauze ribbons, along with many other old things, is a happy idea. They have a particularly nice effect on thin, light materials.

They are beginning to be used by our New York dressmakers to some extent on such fabrics as mull, nainsook, gauze, lawn, etc.

Another leading Paris style of the moment which, it is predicted, will, with some minor modifications, be in great vogue for seaside and watering place dresses this summer consists of a skirt of checked, changeable surah or silk and of an overdress of some soft wool goods, cut into deep squares on the edge, with a straight blouse of the same, shirred in the back and drawn in loosely about the waist by a thick silk cord.

Revers cuffs and collars of the checked material, and a cravat to match. This model is chiefly for young girls and young married ladies.

It presents in so far as the blouse is concerned, another aspect of the liking for half loose, shirred and draped and round waists, which is making itself every day more apparent, and before which the jersey bodice, tight and plain, and moulding the figure closely, of which we have seen more or less variety within the last ten years, is bound sooner or later to go to the wall.

This jersey bodice style will probably be relinquished very fast—it is too becoming as a rule, and especially too advantageous to stout figures; women will not give it up without a struggle.

But is is doomed nevertheless. The woven jersey might be called the climax, the cultivating point of this fashion. The point from which it was fated, by the everlasting law of change which rules feminine fashions, as well as the weightiest affairs of nations, to go down and back, to slowly wane.

That type of waist, admirable as it was from every point of view, has been exhausted. Some change, some novelty, must be brought up in its stead.

But as there is nothing absolutely new under the vault of the heavens, one must resurrect. And so the quaint and really not at all lovely bodices of our mothers and grand-mothers have been dug from the honorable shade where they reposed.

But they are being improved under modern fingers, these bodices.

It is the same thing, and yet not the same. They are draped, gathered, crossed, supplied with bouffant fronts, manipulated in a thousand different ways.

The new methods of closing them, too, diagonally across from the right side of the collar to the left hip, or down the left side alone, always with the outward curving inclination toward the left hip, constitute happy departures from the old type.

With the first mode of fastening there is always the accompaniment of the few soft, loose folds following the diagonal line as it crosses the figure, and the idea of which is reproduced in the separate plastrons of lace, beaded net, etc., now fashionable in Paris and of which we have had already occasion to speak.

The second manner of closing the waist, down the left side, is introduced effectively in the composition of a recent French dress of mouse-gray gros grain, which has a skirt trimmed with bands of the material set, an inch or two apart, from above the small box-plaiting at the foot nearly to the waist, and graduated in width, diminishing as they go up.

The apron falls away in a sharp point in front, and is gathered in rich folds high on the left hip; the back is draped irregularly, one corner forming a point; the waist is fastened by a belt of gros grain, with ends crossed in front; a full jabot of soft mull is carried down the left side over the fastening of invisible hooks, and corresponds with a deep-plaited collarette and cuffs of mull.

The much-used polonaises, which hold their own bravely through all the fluctuations of fashion, are frequently fastened diagonally now or are double-breasted, a la Moscovite.

The right side which laps over, may then be carried down into a point falling over the skirt, while the left side is tucked up to form a panier.

A large rosette of velvet ribbon is found to be an effective finish against the said panier, seeming to hold it up; and there may be a velvet belt. This model has a very pretty effect in soft vollings or cashmeres.

Fireside Chat.

NOVELTIES IN DECORATION.

CERTAINLY the strangest things are thought of nowadays in the way of ornamental and decorative novelties.

Who would have imagined, a short time ago, a stuffed kitten peeping out of a gilded wall-basket, with a bow of ribbon tied round its throat, and a Japanese fan, as background, forming a drawing-room ornament; or a large plush photograph frame, with another little kitten clinging to the top, and peering over as if to get a glimpse of the pictured one below; or a waste-paper or work basket, with a little feline head and shoulders emerging in an inquiring way; or a tamborine, with a sleeping pussy curled round in blissful unconsciousness on a cushion of puffed or quilted satin? These tamborines are the last new toys, and they are decorated in various ways.

The one we saw with the kitten on it was a *bonbonniere*, and had a lid of cardboard, covered with the satin cushion, supported on little gilt nails fixed in at distances inside the rim.

When the bonbons are all disposed of, handkerchiefs can be kept in it, or small personal ornaments, or work materials.

The lid can be painted, or have a smart bow of ribbon, or a cluster of artificial flowers or fruit in a frill of lace.

Another mode of decoration is to paint the parchment base of the tamborine in some pretty way, and attack long intertwined ribbon of two colors, finished off in a large bow.

With these ribbons the tamborine is hung over the edge of a tall screen, or suspended from the corner of a mantel valance, the high back of a chair, or, in fact, wherever fancy dictates.

It is also used as a card receptacle on a writing table, and sometimes has bows nailed on between the tiny double cymbals, all round.

A circular glass or tin for holding flowers is also fitted in.

A great many of these tamborines met with a ready sale at recent bazaars, as they are novel, and one of the little passing fashions of the day.

Lamp shades receive a good deal of attention from young house-wives who are fastidious about their rooms.

The large ones, resembling parasols, composed of frayed ruchings of one or several colored silks, are to be seen in both drawing and dining rooms, edged with a fall of rather wide lace.

The Japanese paper parasols, with a hole cut round the top of the framework of sticks, occasionally form the foundation, but more usually a wire frame is worked upon.

Red silk is most popular, but pink is nearly as much so, and both throw a soft, becoming shade on surrounding objects. Feather butterflies, or humming birds, mounted on quivering wire, are to be seen on some.

The lace covers of parasols, long laid by as being to small for present day use, are now converted into lamp shades over colored silk or paper, with silk ball pompons looping up the divisions.

Even a lace berthe can be utilized in this manner by being laid round a silk covered shade, with a full ruche round the top and round the edge, a bow on one side joining the ends.

To ladies who are fond of displaying their real lace about their rooms this may be an idea.

Lamp shades of artificial grass, with a spray of flowers on one side, are pretty. For candle shades, small fans, or large butterflies, fixed on to little brass holders, which grasp the candle, are popular, especially for reading by.

These holders and frames for shades are obtainable at most oil and lamp shops. A length of red ribbon, tolerably broad, tied in a large bow with the ends spread out butterfly fashion towards the room, forms a pleasant shade, and has a good effect.

This bow is tied round the neck of the white opeque glass shades.

It requires some ingenuity to transform a common pianoforte traveling case into an ornamental object for a drawing-room, but such a metamorphosis can be effected, and was recently shown me.

The slanting lid was hidden by a glass case, framed in wood, made to fit, fastened on to hooks, and containing a collection of miniatures on a velvet background.

The front was covered by a long looking-glass, screened by red plush curtains, and beautifully painted in oils with bulrushes, grasses and waterlilies.

The sides of the case were draped with the same plush, and had one or two old-fashioned pictures and objects of art, pinned on by means of ribbon.

Standing against the wall, the whole thing looked very well, and its origin was beyond a guess.

On the top stood in bold array, colored ware jars, cheap in themselves, but bright in effect, and behind them were peacock and Japanese fans.

The arrangement was carried out by an officer's wife, constantly on the move. Inside the case a quantity of things, only required in traveling, were stowed away safe and sound.

Painting on glass is on the increase. Screens of various heights, the backs of blotters, and the fronts of cottage pianos, as well as many other things are painted.

Even a tall mirror over a console table would have a life-size branch of laburnum painted across; and a smaller glass stretching across a corner of the room, above a writing table, would be partially covered with sprays of apple blossom or thorn.

I saw a short time ago a circular piece of painted plate glass doing duty as a mat to a good-sized cauldron, standing at the side of the fireplace.

The cauldron had a blue painted ribbon and bow as its decoration, and contained coals. A very small pair of bellows lay on the top.

Some cauldrons are gilded. They are not removed from the room to be filled, the real coal scuttle being in reserve out of sight.

The little painted milking stools are very popular, and I am told that a preliminary coat of carriage enamel is better than oil paint, and carriage varnish than copal or spirit.

Both may be obtained from small coachmakers, and as they are very sticky, it is best, is possible, to let the coachman, who is accustomed to the use of them do the work.

The latest in screens are the movable Japanese ones.

Correspondence.

TYRO.—There is not a set form of speech for the occasion. Something to the following effect is suitable: "Allow me to offer my best wishes for your happiness." Of course, if you are on intimate terms, a formal speech would be out of place.

F. H. M.—The "Era of the Jews" is B.C. 3761, whereas the "Common Era" of the English Bible is B.C. 4004. The difference in these dates illustrates the difference between the Jewish chronology and that which is adopted by English Christian writers.

MARY T.—All such persons are knaves or charlatans and can be prosecuted at law. Devote your savings to some better purpose than encouraging a set of imposters whose single aim in life is simply to live on the hard-won shillings of the uneducated and credulous.

REEDER.—What may pass as gallantry in a man will be looked upon as flirtation in a woman. We grant that it is a sin on the part of the male sex, but you are old enough to know the reason why the same sin in women meets with a punishment, that, though it may be the result of deceit, is nevertheless damaging to their future happiness.

GRANGE B.—Yours is a not uncommon complaint, but it is one that can only be cured by your own efforts. You must discipline your mind, and put a strong curb on your imagination. Read moderately only, and let your thoughts dwell more on everyday facts than upon visionary ideas. Look upon the world you inhabit, and make the best of it, without trying to create an ideal one of your own—in in a word, give your mind to realities only.

POST.—Catafalque signifies an elevated tomb (usually only a temporary timber structure), decorated with painting or sculpture, and containing the coffin of a distinguished person. It is generally placed in the middle of a church or large hall, and is surrounded with tapers, armorial bearings, etc. It is most generally used for what is termed the "lying in state" of men who have made a great mark in the world, either by their military acquirements, or by their hereditary rank, as kings, princes, or the first orders of the nobility.

TRYPHINA.—You must be very unsophisticated and innocent to ask our aid in a matter that ninety-nine out of every hundred of your sex are so well versed in. Husband-hunting has become quite a science with some ladies, and they generally manage so well that, while they are really courting themselves, they lead their lovers to believe that they care very little about them. Honey is good to catch flies, and will also do for lovers, but it requires an occasional dash of vinegar to transform a bachelor into a married man. Try the mixture on the gentleman you have selected.

JANE.—The only objection we see to the intermarriage of cousins is the fact that, if there be any hereditary disease or disability in the family, the offspring will have a double dose—so to say—of the evil. As a rule, it is as well that marriages shall consist of the union of opposites, or rather of organisms which are so constituted as to enhance the excellence of each other and counteract the evil tendencies. Similars do not go well together, but those natures which are able to help each other. Generally speaking, the individuals should be members of different families of the same race; but there can be no fixed rule.

ANN.—Iodine is generally prescribed for those swellings of glands which are found in a strumous organism. There is doubtless a scrofulous constitution, and the iodine will promote absorption of the tubercular lymph with which the glands are blocked and irritated. Iodine is also prescribed for swellings which are the result of inflammation in cases in which the glands are not permanently enlarged, but are likely to become so. It should never be employed except under medical advice and direction; but, when so ordered, it is the best possible application, and exceedingly likely, in suitable cases, to do good.

E.—Scales are a succession of sounds proceeding by single steps, and are divided into diatonic chromatic, enharmonic. When formed by a succession of tones and semi-tones according to definite rules, a scale is diatonic. Such a scale is formed by intervals of two tones and a semi-tone, and three tones and a semi-tone, from any given Key-tone. A scale of which all the steps are semi-tones is chromatic; if of smaller intervals, it is enharmonic. The relative minor is a minor third below the major having the same signature, the sixth and seventh being raised one semi-tone, in ascending only, by means of accidentals.

EDW.—The best way to learn a language is to "pen away" at a good grammar until you have mastered it; then get an interesting book and translate it with the aid of grammar and dictionary. All the quick ways and "royal roads" are misleading. It is absurd to suppose that any man can learn a language without trouble and difficulty. If you wish to obtain simply a colloquial knowledge of a living tongue, you may pick it up from those who speak it; but to read a language, and, above all, to write it, you must know the grammar, and it is waste of time and thought to adopt any of the "short" or "ready" methods.

F. H. M.—Pray do not ask us our opinion as to the personality of the Devil if you seriously mean to ask "what his your opinion of my writing." We should not like to express our opinion of your spelling; nor do we wish to give an opinion as to the personality of the Devil. The lecturer who spoke so jocularly of the behavior of the Spirit of Evil has evidently a very firm belief in his existence, and yet—which is strange—he has apparently no fear of offending him by the remarks he makes. Seriously, this is not a subject which should engage your thoughts. Let the learned squabble as to the existence or non-existence of a personal Devil, while you buy a common spelling-book, and learn to write English at least decently well.

JAS. L. B.—What sort of "excessive study" can have placed you in this jeopardy? We cannot understand your case, and therefore are unable to advise you on this point. As regards food, we do not think any particular kinds or classes of food are more strengthening or flesh-forming than others. That is a myth. If the body be healthy, it will grow strong and form flesh on the crudest of food. Philosophic physiologists and chemists who sit in their studies and evolve camels out of their inner consciousnesses talk of flesh-formers; but let them go into the back slums of any large city, and, casting sentimentality to the winds, see the food on which the most muscular of our infant roughs are raised. A very little inquiry in the region of facts will put an end to all these fine theories.